SUZUKA

8

Kouji Seo

TRANSLATED AND ADAPTED BY

David Ury

LETTERED BY

North Market Street Graphics

DEL REY

BALLANTINE BOOKS • NEW YORK

A Note from the Author

ALL OF MY TOMATOES HAVE DIED.
I'LL HAVE TO POSTPONE MY BIG TOMATO
PARTY UNTIL NEXT YEAR...

8

SUZUKA

KOUJI SEO

SUZUKA

8

Kouji Seo

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ALL RUNNERS, PLEASE COME TO THE TRACK IMMEDIATELY.

ATTENTION, PLEASE. WE WILL BE STARTING THE MEN'S 100 METER DASH PRELIMINARY SHORTLY.

STOMP

JUST WATCH.

I'M GONNA BE THE NUMBER ONE RUNNER IN ALL OF JAPAN!!

#60 Accomplishment

STEP
カッ
ッ!
36
カッ
ッ!
STEP
AKIT-
SUKI!!
ALL RIGHT... IT'S TIME TO DO THIS.
WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN? THAT WAS THE FINAL CALL!!
DON'T WORRY. I HEARD IT.
136

HE IS TOO A LITTLE KID. DON'T YOU REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED LAST RACE?

COME ON, KINUGASA-SENPAI, HE'S NOT A LITTLE KID.

カ!! YANK シ!!

WAHH! NO, I'VE GOT EVERY-THING.

BYOON うぃ

ARE YOU WEARING YOUR UNIFORM!? YOU DIDN'T FORGET YOUR TRACK SHOES DID YOU?

WH-WHAT? NOBODY TOLD ME THAT.

YOU'RE OUR TEAM'S NEW ACE IN THE HOLE. IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU STARTED ACTING LIKE IT.

H-HEY...

AKIT-SUKI-KUN, GOOD LUCK...

O-OKAY... GOOD LUCK.

SAKURAI!! I'M GONNA TAKE FIRST PLACE AGAIN IN THE 200-METER RACE!!

.....

AH, HEY, AKIT-SUKI.

OUCH!!

SLAP

ALL RIGHT. NOW SHOW 'EM WHAT YOU'RE MADE OF.

I KNOW.

O-OKAY. NEVER MIND THEN...

I'M SURE YOU'RE AWARE OF THIS, BUT...

ONLY SEVEN OR EIGHT PEOPLE RUNNING IN THIS RACE WILL BREAK TWELVE SECONDS, SO...

カッツン

CLOPPA

カ

CLOPPA

136

YEAH?

WELL, DON'T OVERDO IT.

HEY, WILL YOU PLEASE STOP ACTING LIKE SUCH A WEIRDO? YOU'RE TOTALLY EMBARRASSING ME.

I'M JUST TRYING TO GET MYSELF PUMPED UP, THAT'S ALL.

I CAN'T HOLD BACK THIS TIME.

CLOPPA

CLOPPA

I HAVE TO WIN EVERY RACE!!

125

IT'S AKIT-SUKI AND SU-ZUKA!

WHAT'S WRONG? YOU LOOK REALLY IR-RITATED.

MAYBE YOU HAVEN'T BEEN GETTING ENOUGH CALCIUM.

WANT THIS?

THIS IS RIDICU-LOUS...

SIGH...

OF COURSE NOT!!

ARE YOU JEAL-OUS OR SOME-THING?

WHAT? WELL ISN'T THAT A GOOD THING?

THEY FINALLY MADE UP...

I WAS REALLY WORRIED THAT SUZUKA WAS GONNA HATE AKITSUKI FOREVER. I'D BEEN THINKING ABOUT IT NONSTOP.

CRUNCH

AND NOW...

YOU KNOW, YOU'RE A REALLY NICE PERSON BUT YOU SHOULDN'T WASTE YOUR TIME WORRYING ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE'S BUSINESS.

I TOLD YOU TO LEAVE HIM ALONE.

I REALIZE I WAS ALL WORRIED FOR NOTHING.

I'M JUST EXHAUSTED FROM ALL THAT THINKING.

WHAT? I'M HERE TO SHOW MY SUPPORT FOR MY GOOD FRIEND, YAMATO.

SHUT UP!

I MEAN, WHAT ARE YOU EVEN DOING HERE!?

YOU HAVE WAY TOO MUCH TIME ON YOUR HANDS...

IT'S REALLY FUN WATCH-ING YAMATO.

HE ALWAYS GETS INTO TROUBLE.

OH, GIVE ME A BREAK. YOU JUST COULDN'T FIND ANYTHING BETTER TO DO.

CHATTER

CHATTER

NUM-BER 921, YA-MANE-KUN.

RIGHT HERE!

HERE!!

NUM-BER 1054, TAN-AKA-KUN.

THAT'S NOT TRUE.

HERE!!

NUMBER 910, ARIMA-KUN.

THAT'S RIGHT... I FORGOT HE'S IN MY DISTRICT.

EMERSON ARIMA...

WILL YOU JUST GET LOST? YOU'RE STARTING TO ANNOY ME.

...RAN THE 100 METER DASH IN 10.46 SECONDS.

EMERSON ARIMA FROM TOUTO PREP...

DO YOU KNOW THAT GUY, ARIMA-SENPAI?

I'LL NEVER BE NUMBER ONE IN JAPAN UNLESS I BEAT HIM...

. . . . . .

NOPE.

CAN I REALLY DO IT...?

ON YOUR MARKS...

TRY NOT TO LOSE THIS TIME!

G-GOOD LUCK!

GO, AKI-TSU-KI!!

FWISH

ガチャ

FWISH

ガチャ

SHUT UP! JUST LEAVE ME ALONE.

KINU-GASA-SENPAI...

WHY ARE YOU ALWAYS HIDING?

.....

LET'S SEE, WHAT HAPPENS THIS TIME.

HE'S PROB-ABLY NER-VOUS...

CHECK HIM OUT! HE LOOKS ALL SE-RIOUS.

GET SET!

WHAT IF I LOSE? WHAT AM I GONNA DO?

CLACKA

CLACKA

I DIDN'T MISS A SINGLE PRACTICE FOR TWO WHOLE MONTHS, BUT STILL...

SHE'LL PROBABLY JUST TURN ME DOWN AGAIN.

EVEN IF I TELL HER HOW I FEEL...

FWICK

GO!

I'M NOT EVEN GONNA THINK ABOUT IT ANYMORE.

CREAK

BUT I STILL LIKE ASAHINA!

ALL I CAN DO NOW IS GIVE IT MY BEST SHOT!

BANG

136

GOOD... HE'S OFF TO A BETTER START THAN LAST TIME.

OF COURSE HE IS! I MADE HIM PRAC-TICE HIS TAKEOFF ABOUT A THOUSAND TIMES.

WOOO!

OH MY GOD, THAT GUY'S FAST!

HMMPH.

THAT'S IT, AKITSUKI!!

YOUR FORM IS LOOKING GOOD!!

WHOOSH

...WITH A TIME OF 10.81 SECONDS!!

IN FIRST PLACE IS NUMBER 136...

YES!!

10.81... SEC-ONDS...

WHOA, HE MAN-AGED NOT TO SCREW THINGS UP THIS TIME.

.....

125

I DID IT!!

I CAME IN FIRST! FIRST PLACE!!

136

9"7 FWOOSH

SENPA-I!!

9"4 FWOOSH

. . . . . .

UH- HUH... YEAH...

DID YOU SEE ME!?

10.81 SECONDS, MY BEST TIME EVER!!

136

SASAKI- SENPAI...

TAP

YEAH, THAT WAS GOOD. JUST MAKE SURE YOU DO THAT WELL IN THE RELAY, TOO.

136

131

UH... HUH?

WHAT'S GOING ON? I'M STILL NOT FAST ENOUGH FOR THEM...?

. . . . . ?

I TOLD YOU NOT TO OVERDO IT, DIDN'T I?

WHAT?

EVERYONE KNOWS YOU'RE FAST.

136

DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT YOU CAN KEEP UP THAT PACE THROUGH BOTH THE SEMIFINALS AND THE RELAY?

125

YOU'VE GOT TO START THINKING ABOUT PACE.

DIDN'T MIYAMOTO SENPAI TELL YOU THAT ONLY SEVEN OR EIGHT RUNNERS WOULD BREAK TWELVE SECONDS IN THIS RACE?

TWENTY-FOUR PEOPLE WILL MAKE IT TO THE SEMIFI-NALS.

WHICH MEANS EVEN IF YOU KEEP YOUR TIME DOWN BETWEEN 11.30 SECONDS AND 12.00 SECONDS, YOU'LL STILL QUALIFY.

WHOA, WHOA... IT'S ALL RIGHT. YOU WERE REALLY FAST, AKITSUKI! YOU DID GOOD!

11"

FLUP

WELL...

WHY SHOULD I CARE!!

YOU ARE SUCH A DORK.

YOU SHOULD AT LEAST KNOW HOW THE TOURNAMENT WORKS.

SLUMP

136

I... TRIED REALLY HARD...

10.81 SECONDS...

HMMM.

WELL, ONE THING'S FOR SURE...

HE'S FASTER THAN TSUDA WAS IN HIS PRIME.

SUZUKA

#61 Earnestness

WHOOSH

IN FIRST PLACE IS NUMBER 910 WITH A TIME OF 11.01 SECONDS!!

YEAH, YOU COULD TELL HE WAS TOTALLY HOLDING BACK FOR THE LAST HALF OF THE RACE, BUT HE STILL CAME IN UNDER TWELVE SECONDS.

I KNEW ARIMA WOULD WIN. HE DIDN'T EVEN HAVE TO TRY.

.....

HE'S DEFI-NITELY IN A LEAGUE OF HIS OWN.

HE'LL WIN THE SEMIFI-NALS NO PROB-LEM.

...AND MY PERSONAL BEST IS THE 10.81 SECONDS I JUST RAN.

HIS RECORD FOR THE 100-METER DASH IS 10.46 SECONDS

117

...BUT WE'LL DEFINITELY BE GOING UP AGAINST EACH OTHER IN THE FINALS.

WE WERE IN A DIFFERENT HEAT FOR THIS RACE...

THAT'S A GAP OF .35 SEC-ONDS...

AH, AKIT-SUKI-KUN...

OH... UH... I'M ALL RIGHT. I JUST HAD SOME-THING TO DRINK.

UM... ARE YOU THIRSTY?

HE WON'T BE EASY TO BEAT.

WHAT AM I TALKING ABOUT...

OH, YEAH...

THAT'S RIGHT, I SAW YOU DRINKING SOMETHING...

UH...IS SOMETHING THE MATTER!?

N-NO...IT'S NOTHING.

YEAH, THANKS.

WELL, GOOD LUCK!

AKITSUKI-KUN'S BEEN REALLY DISTANT...

...THESE LAST FEW WEEKS.

FOR SOME REA-SON...

WE USED TO BE SO CLOSE, AND NOW...

HUH? REALLY!?

YEP.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO RUN THE 100-METER DASH IN THE FINALS, BECAUSE IT'S A "TIMED" RACE.

THE TOP EIGHT RUNNERS IN THE SEMIFINALS WILL AUTOMATICALLY ADVANCE TO THE TOKYO FINALS.

SO, THEY'LL JUST GO BY YOUR TIME FROM THE SEMIFINALS.

IN OTHER WORDS...

THE SEMIFINAL RACE IS PRETTY MUCH THE SAME THING AS THE FINALS.

136

. . . . . .

THAT MEANS I WON'T BE COMPETING WITH ARIMA THIS TIME...

YOU PROBABLY THOUGHT THAT YOU'D BE RUNNING IN THE FINALS, TOO, RIGHT?

WELL... YEAH...

131

ALL RUNNERS PLEASE COME TO THE STARTING LINE IMMEDIATELY.

THIS IS THE FINAL CALL FOR THE MEN'S 100 METER DASH SEMIFINAL!!

WHAT!? DIDN'T YOU SEE ME RUN IN THE PRE-LIMINAR-IES AFTER YOUR RACE!?

OH, ARE YOU IN THIS RACE, TOO, SASAKI-SENPAI?

LET'S GO, AKITSUKI. DON'T LOSE FOCUS.

WAHH! HEY, WATCH OUT! YOU'VE GOT YOUR SPIKES ON.

YOU'D BETTER START PAYING ATTENTION TO WHAT YOUR SENPAIS ARE DOING, MAN.

WHAT...?

WELL, HE'S JUST A PERFEC-TIONIST, THAT'S ALL...

HE CAN'T STAND SEE-ING PEOPLE GO INTO A RACE WITH A HALF-ASSED ATTITUDE.

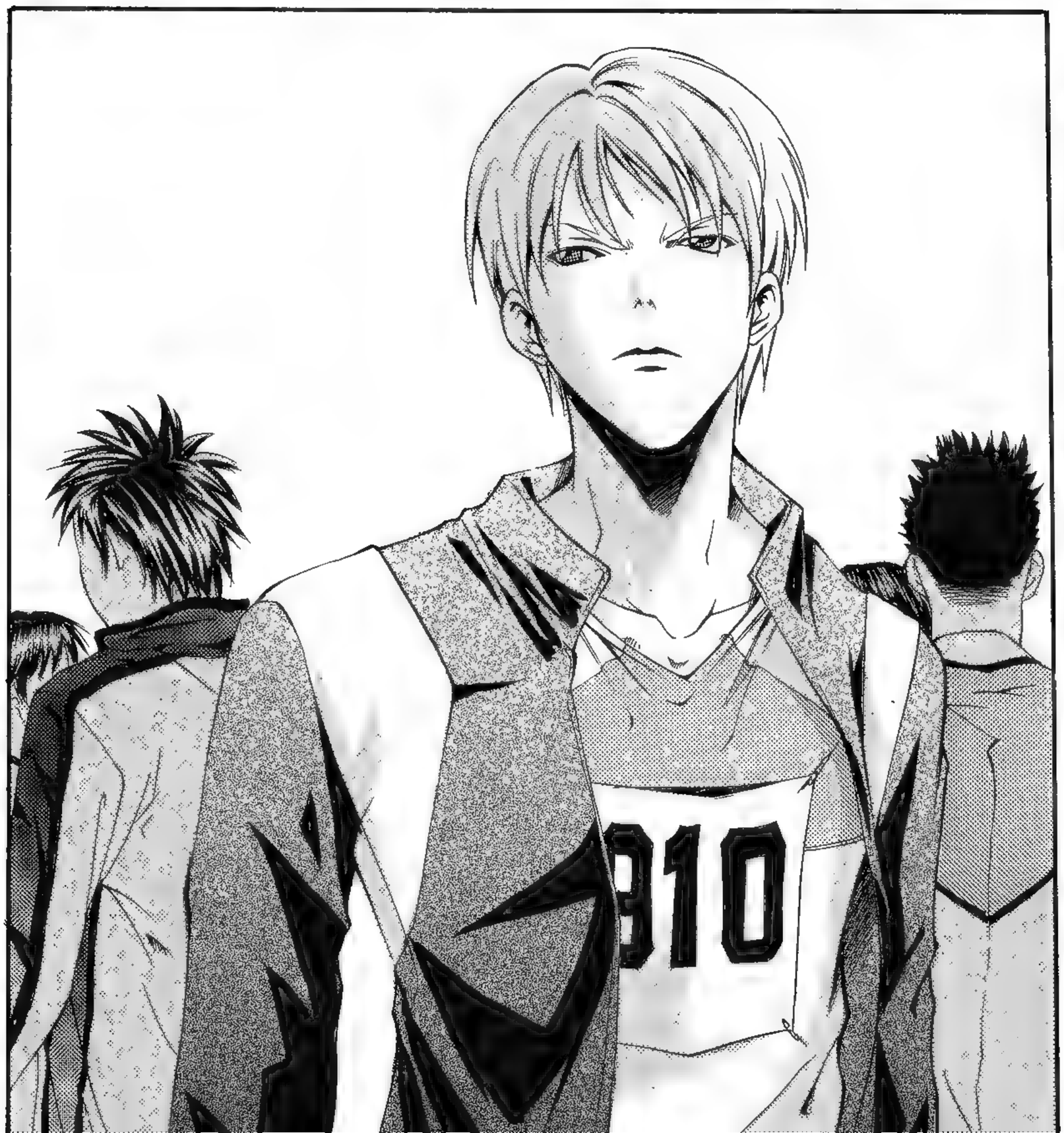
SASAKI IS BEING A PAIN IN THE ASS AGAIN.

I DON'T KNOW HOW TO DEAL WITH THAT GUY.

136

...HOW AKITSUKI REALLY FEELS ABOUT TRACK..

I THINK HE'S JUST FRUSTRATED BECAUSE HE CAN'T FIGURE OUT...



BUT WE'LL STILL BE COMPETING FOR THE BEST TIME.

SO, IT TURNS OUT, I'M NOT ACTUALLY RUNNING DIRECTLY AGAINST ARIMA IN THIS TOURNAMENT...

RIGHT HERE!!

910

NUMBER 910, ARIMA-KUN!

SENPAI!...

HEY, WHAT'S WRONG? WHY THE LONG FACE?

NERVOUS ABOUT YOUR FIRST TIME IN THE SEMIFI-NALS?

HIS BEST TIME IS 10.46 SEC-ONDS.

WHAT? QUIT TALK-ING LIKE A PUSSY, THE RACE HASN'T EVEN STARTED YET.

TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, I JUST DON'T KNOW IF I HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO...

136

THERE'S NO WAY I CAN BEAT HIM...

NO... WHAT I MEAN IS...

I'M NOT SURE IF I'LL HAVE ENOUGH ENERGY LEFT FOR THE RELAY AFTER THIS.

WELL, YOU'D BETTER PROVE ME WRONG AND AT LEAST TAKE FIRST PLACE IN THE 100-METER DASH.

YOU'VE GOT TO BEAT ARIMA.

OH GREAT...

THAT'S WHY I DIDN'T WANT YOU ON OUR TEAM IN THE FIRST PLACE.

AH...

.....

OF COURSE, THAT'S THE PLAN...

131

136

WELL, JUST MAKE SURE YOU DON'T OVERDO IT AT THE START AND END UP TRIPPING OVER YOUR OWN TWO FEET.

SWIP

I WON'T.

I'M GONNA BECOME THE NUMBER ONE RUNNER IN JAPAN, RIGHT BEFORE ASAHINA'S EYES!!

I'M GONNA WIN THIS THING...

...EVEN IF I ONLY BEAT ARIMA BY A TENTH OF A SECOND.

YAMATO-KUN IS IN THE FIRST GROUP. I WONDER IF HE FINISHED ALREADY.

THE 100-METER SEMIFINAL MUST HAVE STARTED ALREADY.

THERE YOU ARE!

WHOOSH

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

AKITSUKI ALREADY FINISHED HIS RACE!

YEAH...

HOW DID YAMATO-KUN DO...?

SO...

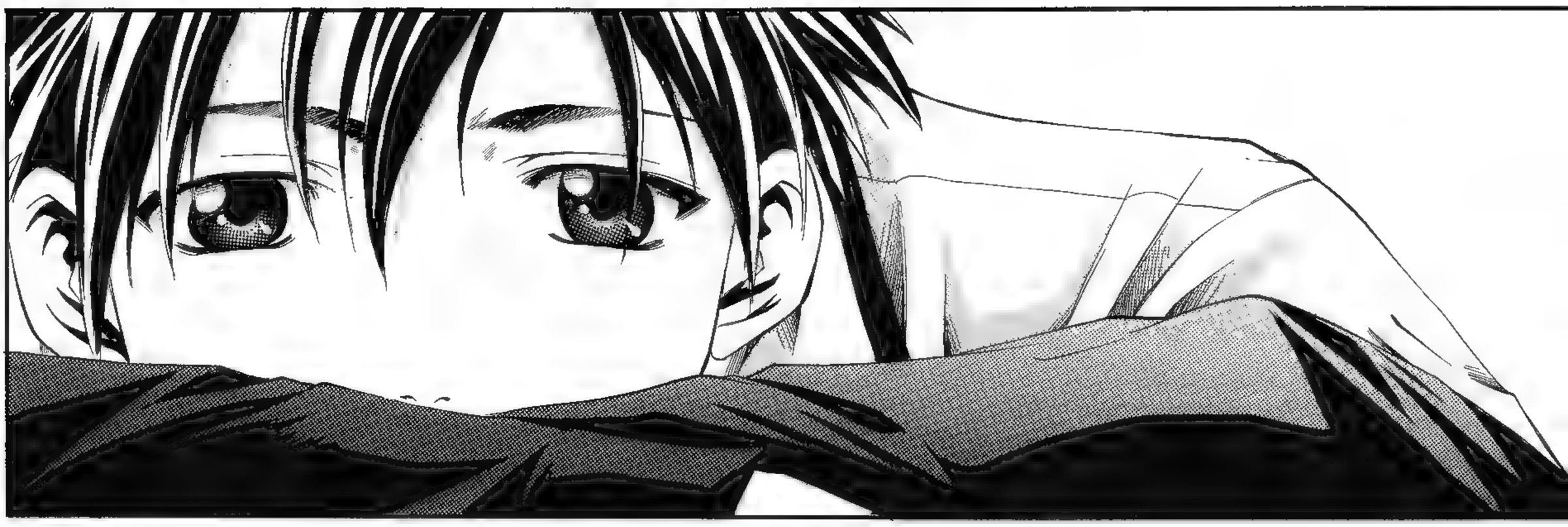
. . . . . .

OH YEAH...

HOW DID HE DO? HE RAN IT IN 10.66 SECONDS. HE'S IN FIRST PLACE WITH A HUGE LEAD!!

ISN'T THAT AMAZING? I KNEW HE COULD DO IT!!

ON TOP OF THAT, HE BROKE THE RECORD OF 10.69 SECONDS THAT ARIMA SET AT THIS YEAR'S INTER-HIGH SCHOOL TOURNAMENT. THAT MAKES AKITSUKI THE TOP RUNNER FOR THE ENTIRE YEAR!!



WHY DON'T YOU LIGHTEN UP A BIT?
YOU ARE THE TOP RUNNER FOR THE WHOLE YEAR.

QUIT STANDING AROUND TRYING TO LOOK ALL SERIOUS AND COOL.

YEAH...I WAS FOR ABOUT TEN SEC-ONDS.
.....

WHAT?

THE THIRD
PRELIMINARY ROUND OF
THE TOKYO HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
CHAMPIONSHIPS 100-METER
SEMIFINALS

NUMBER	NAME	GRADE	CLASS	LANE	RANKING	RECORDS
910	EMERSON ARIMA	SOPHO-MORE	3	2	First place	10.50 seconds
136	YAMATO AKITSUKI	FRESH-MAN	1	4	Second place	10.66 seconds
131	KAZUYUKI SASAKI	SOPHO-MORE	2	1	Third place	11.23 seconds
925	SATORU UEHARA	SOPHO-MORE	2	3	Forth place	11.29 seconds
920	YOUJI TAKAHASHI	SOPHO-MORE	1	2	Fifth place	11.40 second
1392	SHINJI KUWATA	SOPHO-MORE	3	4	Sixth place	11.80 secon
		SOPHO-	1	3	Seventh place	12

LOOK...

THAT JERK BLEW ME AWAY!

HUH? SO YOU CAME IN SEC-OND?

B-BUT STILL, IT'S AMAZING. 10.66 SECONDS!!

THAT MEANS YOU'RE IN SECOND PLACE FOR THE INTER HIGH. BESIDES, YOU STILL MADE IT INTO THE TOKYO HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT CHAMPION-SHIPS.

.....

.....

UM... WELL...

SECOND AND THIRD DON'T MEAN SHIT TO ME.

I'VE...

...GOT TO BE NUMBER ONE!

THUMP

THUMP

I'M MUCH BETTER AT TAKING OFF NOW...

AND I DON'T THINK MY FORM WHEN I'M SPRINTING AT TOP SPEED LOOKS THAT BAD.

HEY...WHAT DO YOU THINK'S WRONG WITH ME?

WHAT!?

BUT I ALWAYS FEEL LIKE I START TO LOSE MOMENTUM DURING THE LAST TWENTY METERS.

I THOUGHT I MIGHT BE DOING SOMETHING WRONG.

UM... WELL...

HMM...

OH WELL... YOU ARE A HIGH-JUMPER, SO I GUESS YOU WOULDN'T KNOW...

I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT THE TECH-NICAL STUFF, UM...

SORRY...

I KNOW! I'LL GO ASK THE EX-CAPTAIN.

SORRY FOR ASKING SUCH A WEIRD QUESTION.

TH-THAT'S OKAY.

PHEW...

FLIP

WHOOSH

WHOOSH

WHOOSH

WHAT'S GOING ON...?

SUDDENLY HE'S TAKING EVERYTHING SO SERIOUSLY...

I'LL BRING SOME OVER RIGHT AWAY!

HEY, WE'RE OUT OF POCARI SWEAT.

OKAY!

HEY, MANAGER SAKURAI, WILL YOU HELP ME SET UP THE HURDLES?

SUZUKA

CHATTER

CHATTER

THE TOURNAMENT JUST ENDED YESTERDAY, BUT THEY'RE ALREADY TRAINING SO HARD.

PHEW...

HEY, MANAGER!!

AH.

YES!!

SUZUKA

#62 Wandering

HEY, YOU!! NO SITTING DOWN!

ALL RIGHT, WE'LL TAKE A THREE MINUTE BREAK!!

AH...

GOD! THIS IS SO HARSH!!

FWEESH

AKITSUKI-KUN, HERE'S A TOWEL...

!

SWIP

AND WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED AT YESTERDAY'S RELAY? YOU TOTALLY RAN OUT OF STEAM.

W-WELL...

YOU'RE LUCKY YOU MADE IT TO THE TOKYO HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT CHAMPION-SHIPS.

FWEESH

W-WELL, I'M STILL TIRED FROM YESTER-DAY...

IS THAT ALL IT TAKES TO WEAR YOU OUT?

YOU DON'T HAVE ENOUGH STAMINA!!

AH, THANKS!

TCH

BUT YOU DID DO A GOOD JOB PASSING THE BATON, AKITSUKI.

OH, NOTHING, REALLY.

UM...

WHAT DID YOU GUYS DO?

MAYBE I DESERVE THE CREDIT FOR THAT.

PRACTICE! THAT'S THE ANSWER. PRACTICE!

THAT'S RIGHT.

THIS TIME, I'M GONNA BE COM-PETING WITH ARIMA FROM TOUTO PREP AT THE TOKYO DISTRICT CHAM-PIONSHIPS. I'M REALLY GONNA HAVE TO WORK HARD.

SUZUKA TOPPED THE PRELIMINARIES...

I'VE GOTTA HANG IN THERE, TOO...

I DON'T KNOW WHY, BUT...

I'M STARTING TO FEEL LIKE AKITSUKI-KUN IS LEAVING ME BEHIND.

WHAT!?

WHAT IS IT!?

SORRY, I CAN'T HEAR YOU!

AH, I'LL BE RIGHT THERE!!

YOU SURE?

CHATTER

CHATTER

WELL, IF YOU SAY SO...

I'M SORRY TO BOTHER YOU AT WORK.

I'LL CALL BACK LATER.

UH...NO, I'M FINE. YEAH... I JUST WANTED TO TALK...

OKAY, TALK TO YOU LATER THEN.

AH! WAIT A MINUTE!!

UH...

YEAH... I DON'T HAVE TRACK PRACTICE IN THE AFTERNOON, SO...

HONOKA, ARE YOU FREE...

...THIS SUNDAY AFTER-NOON?

THEN, WILL YOU COME TO WORK WITH ME?

GREAT!

BEEP BEEP

W-WORK? WHY WOULD YOU WANT ME TO—?

AH, SORRY, GOTTA GO! I'LL GIVE YOU THE DETAILS LATER!

CLICK

WHAT'S SHE TALKING ABOUT? GO WITH HER TO WORK...?

SUNDAY

THEY DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME, SO IF YOU COULD HURRY IT UP A LITTLE!

ZZZ

UMM, MAKE A LEFT AT THE NEXT SIGNAL.

YEAH!

AH... NICE TO MEET YOU, TOO.

PLEASED TO MEET YOU!

THANKS FOR HELPING US TODAY.

PARDON ME. I FORGOT TO INTRO-DUCE MYSELF. MY NAME IS ONODERA, I'M NANA SHI-RAKAWA'S MANAGER.

Onodera

WHY THE HELL...

...DID SHE WANNA TAKE ME HERE?

UH... SO

WHY DID YOU WANT ME HERE TODAY?

WELL...IF I'D TOLD HER THE TRUTH, SHE WOULD NEVER HAVE COME.

FWIP

WHAT'S GOING ON, NANA?

NO...

WHAT? DIDN'T NANA EXPLAIN?

THE THING IS, WE'RE PLANNING TO DO THIS MAGAZINE PIECE ABOUT NANA'S PRIVATE LIFE.

I AM SO SORRY. I GUESS YOU DIDN'T GET THE DETAILS...

UH...

PLE-ASE, HO-NOKA.

YOU'RE THE ONLY FRIEND THAT I HAVE—

OH...

WE WANT A SHOT OF NANA CHATTING WITH A FRIEND IN A CAFÉ ON HER DAY OFF.

WAKE ME UP IN TEN MINUTES, OKAY...

...WHAT!?

I-I CAN'T DO THAT!!

NO WAY!! I JUST CAN'T!!

LET'S GET HER BANGS FIXED UP, PLEASE!

THE LIGHTING IS READY.

IT'S OKAY. DON'T WORRY.

YOUR FACE WILL HARDLY EVEN SHOW IN THE PHOTO.

Y-YEAH...

WE'VE GOT THIS PLACE RESERVED FOR AN HOUR... IT'S JUST US!

ISN'T THAT GREAT?

I'LL TIME THE SHOT SO IT LOOKS NATURAL.

JUST LOOK LIKE YOU'RE TALKING AND HAVING A GOOD TIME.

ALL RIGHT, WE'RE READY TO SHOOT!

BUT...

DON'T BE NER-VOUS.

JUST RELAX.

WHAT!?

WHAT!?

THAT'S EASY FOR YOU TO SAY...

HOW THE HECK AM I SUPPOSED TO RELAX?

LOOK AT ALL THESE PEOPLE STARING AT ME!

.....

FWIPPA

L!

HEY, LOOK AT ME!

JUST IMAGINE THAT WE'RE HAVING A NORMAL CONVER-SATION.

WHAT...?

IT MUST BE REALLY HARD...

...HAVING TO DO THIS ALL THE TIME, NANA-CHAN.

.....

NOT REALLY.

OH...

I LIKE WHAT I DO.

DON'T TRY TOO HARD, JUST RELAX...

S- SORRY!! I'LL TRY!!

AH!

UMM... CAN YOU TRY TO LOOK LIKE YOU'RE HAVING A BIT MORE FUN?

SHE LOOKS GREAT WHEN SHE'S NOT IN FRONT OF THE CAMERA, BUT...

I DON'T THINK WE CAN USE THESE SHOTS.

SHE LOOKS SO STIFF.

ZAA

ザー

ア！

WELL, I'D BEEN SO BUSY LATELY AND I DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO SEE YOU, HONOKA-CHAN.

SO, I WAS KIND OF WORRIED ABOUT YOU.

HUH? WHY?

I'M SORRY, I SHOULDN'T HAVE DRAGGED YOU AROUND LIKE THIS.

ARE YOU TIRED?

PLUP

I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT STILL BE DEPRESSED ABOUT THE BREAK-UP...

OR HAVE YOU ALREADY MET SOMEONE NEW?

UH...A LITTLE. BUT IT WAS FUN GETTING TO SEE YOU ON THE JOB, NANA.

YEAH...

W-
WELL...

WHAT?
YOU DID?

WHO IS IT!?
SOMEBODY
FROM YOUR
TRACK
TEAM!?

WHAT...?

WHEN I
BECOME
A LITTLE
MORE
CONFI-
DENT...

I WANT
TO TELL
HIM HOW
I FEEL
AGAIN.

IT'S...
AKIT-
SUKI-
KUN...

BUT, LATELY, HE SEEMS SO DISTANT.

AND IT'S LIKE THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO ABOUT IT...EXCEPT GET ALL FRUS-TRATED.

I SEE...

YEAH...

HONOKA...

BUT...

AH...NO, THAT'S OKAY! SORRY FOR RAMBLING ON ABOUT MY BORING LIFE!!

I JUST NEEDED TO GET THAT OFF MY CHEST.

ALL RIGHT, NANA. WE'VE GOT A BEAUTIFUL SUNSET IN THE BACK-GROUND NOW, LET'S SHOOT IT!!

SORRY, I HAVE TO GO! YOU CAN TELL ME MORE ABOUT IT LATER.

COME ON, HURRY UP!!

HUH? AH... I JUST NEED A COUPLE MINUTES WITH HO-NOKA...

PERFECT. OKAY, OKAY!!

OKAY, LOOK OVER HERE AND GIVE ME A NICE SMILE!

I'M TOTALLY GETTING IN THE WAY OF HER WORK.

.....

CLICK

CLICK

CLICK

NOT REALLY.

I LIKE WHAT I DO.

NANA IS AMAZ-ING.

THEY JUST TELL HER WHAT THEY WANT AND SHE GIVES IT TO THEM, ANYWHERE, ANYTIME.

I'VE GOTTA HANG IN THERE, TOO...

THIS TIME, I'M GONNA BE COMPETING WITH ARIMA FROM TOUTO PREP AT THE TOKYO DISTRICT CHAMPIONSHIPS.

SUZUKA TOPPED THE PRELIMINARIES...

I'M REALLY GONNA HAVE TO WORK HARD.

.....

WHAT AM I DOING HERE?

TAP

TAP

TAP

TAP

CLICK!

ARIMA	0	3.6
AKITSUKI	0	3.1

TAP

TAP

TAP

TAP

HMM...

SUZUKA

#63 Acceleration

ALL RIGHT, LET'S GET TO WORK!

AH... YEAH.

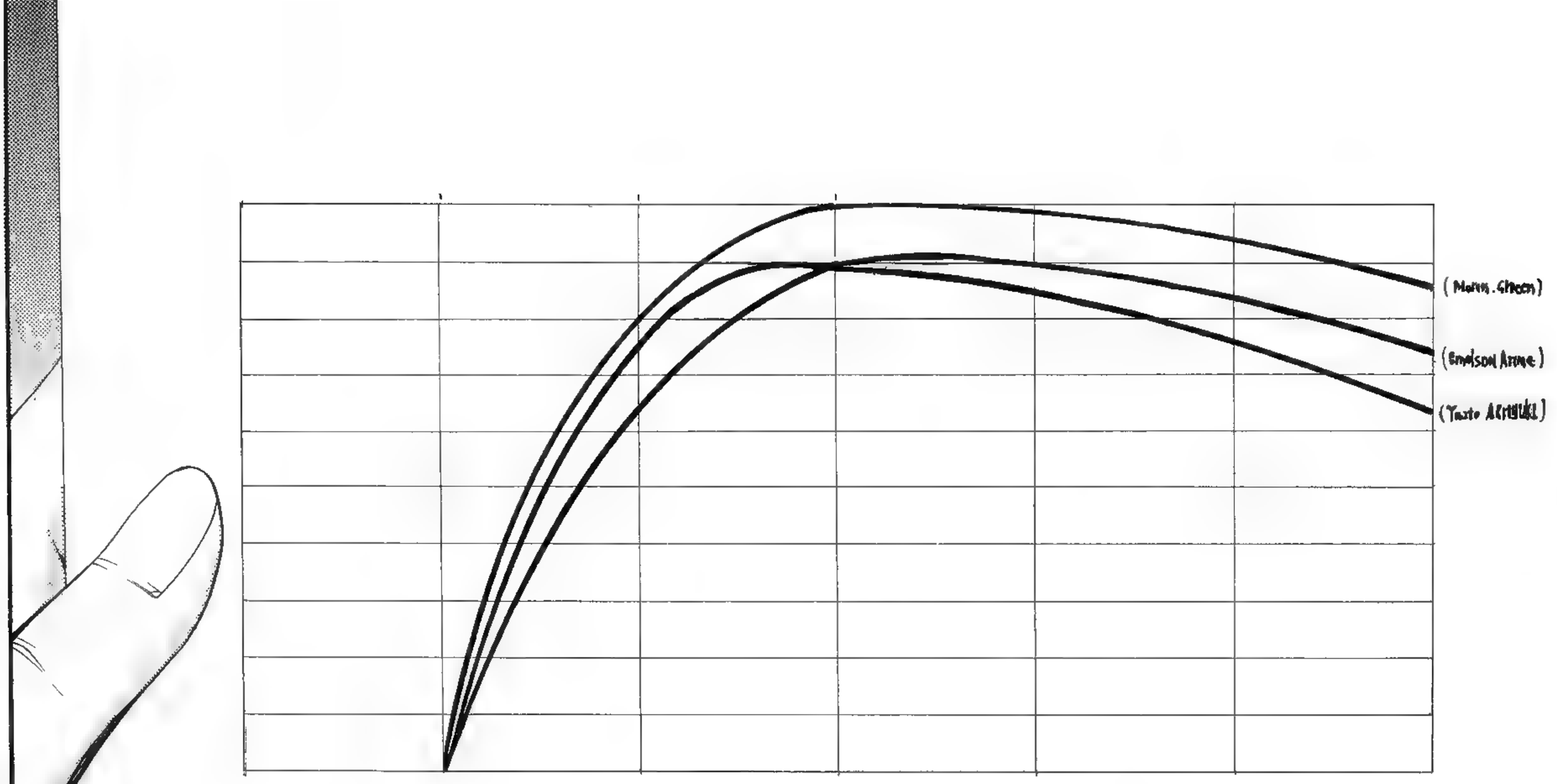
AKITSUKI, CAN I TALK TO YOU FOR A SEC?

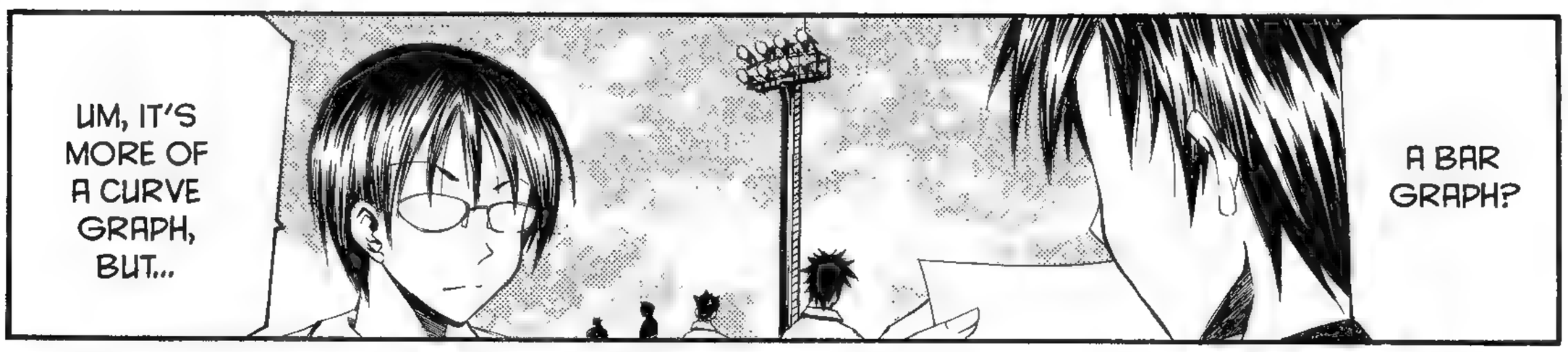
WELL...

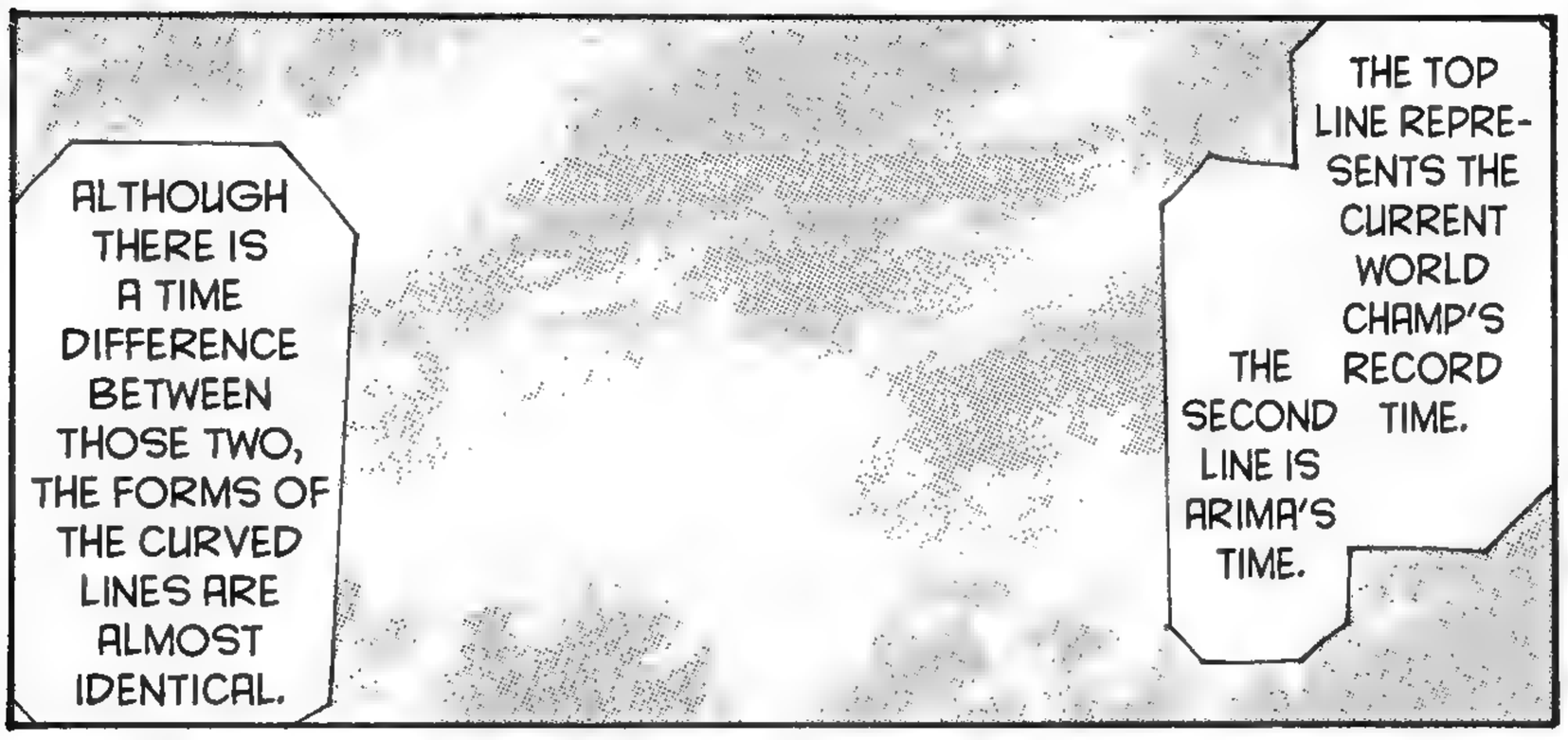
I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT IT, AND I CAME UP WITH THIS...

YOU SAID YOU FELT LIKE YOU WERE LOSING MOMENTUM DURING THE LAST HALF OF THE 100-METER DASH, RIGHT?

YEAH...


(Mario . Green)
(Emilson Arima)
(Yuzo Akiyuki)


UM, IT'S MORE OF A CURVE GRAPH, BUT...
A BAR GRAPH?


ALTHOUGH THERE IS A TIME DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THOSE TWO, THE FORMS OF THE CURVED LINES ARE ALMOST IDENTICAL.
THE TOP LINE REPRESENTS THE CURRENT WORLD CHAMP'S RECORD TIME.
THE SECOND LINE IS ARIMA'S TIME.

THIS SHOWS YOUR TIME VERSUS ARIMA'S TIME IN TWENTY-METER INTERVALS.
IN OTHER WORDS...

ARIMA HAS THE KIND OF STYLE AND FORM THAT COULD MAKE HIM NUMBER ONE IN THE WORLD SOME DAY.

TAP

YOU REACH TOP SPEED VERY EARLY IN THE RACE, AND THEN YOU GRADUALLY START TO LOSE SPEED.

BUT, IF WE TAKE A LOOK AT THE THIRD LINE DOWN, THE ONE THAT REPRESENTS YOU...

THE TOP SPEED REACHED IS ABOUT THE SAME AS ARIMA'S, BUT...

I NEED TO MAINTAIN MY TOP SPEED FOR A LONGER PERIOD, RIGHT?

SO, WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO SAY IS...

THWUP

SO, YOU'RE SAYING I CAN NEVER BEAT THIS GUY!?

THAT'S PHYSICALLY IMPOS-SIBLE.

NO ONE CAN RUN AT MAXIMUM VELOCITY FOR MORE THAN SIX SECONDS.

J-JUST HEAR ME OUT.

YOU CAN SHORTEN THE AMOUNT OF TIME THAT YOU'RE DE-CELERATING.

IF YOU JUST HOLD BACK A LITTLE, AND LET YOURSELF GRADUALLY REACH TOP SPEED...

YOU CAN'T RUN ANY LONGER AT MAX VELOCITY, BUT...

...IT IS POS-SIBLE TO WAIT TILL THE LATTER HALF OF THE RACE BE-FORE YOU REACH PEAK ACCELERA-TION.

WELL, MAYBE...

AND THEN I'D BE ABLE TO FINISH WITH A BETTER TIME!?

WHAT...?

A-ALL RIGHT THEN...

STARTING TODAY, I'M GONNA TAILOR YOUR TRAINING SO YOU CAN FOCUS ON ALTERING YOUR STYLE.

BUT IT'S VERY HARD TO JUST CHANGE YOUR RUNNING STYLE LIKE THAT, YOU KNOW?

AND WE DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME LEFT BEFORE THE DISTRICT CHAMPION-SHIPS, SO YOU'RE PROBABLY BETTER OFF STICKING TO YOUR CUR-RENT STYLE IF YOU CAN'T PERFECT THE NEW ONE.

I CAN DO IT!!

ALL RIGHT!

I FOUND A WAY TO BECOME FASTER...!

THANKS A LOT!!

COME SEE ME AFTER YOU WARM UP.

AH...

HUH!?

WHAT PROB-LEM...?

HEY, ASAHINA. I'VE FIGURED OUT THE PROBLEM I WAS TALKING ABOUT THE OTHER DAY!

STEP

STEP

IT LOOKS LIKE MY RUNNING STYLE WAS NO GOOD.

BUT IF I CAN CHANGE IT, I'LL BE ABLE TO RUN FASTER.

YOU KNOW HOW I WAS SAYING THAT I AL-WAYS LOSE MOMENTUM TOWARD THE END OF THE 100-METER DASH?

AH...YEAH...I REMEMBER NOW...

ARE YOU SURE?

SOUNDS A LITTLE TOO SIMPLE...

YOU ONLY HAVE TWO WEEKS UNTIL THE DISTRICT CHAMPION-SHIPS.

DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN CHANGE YOUR STYLE IN TWO WEEKS?

IT'S TRUE. MIYAMOTO-SENPAI FIGURED IT OUT.

IT TAKES A LOT OF TIME TO FIX SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

E-EVEN IF HE'S RIGHT...

IF YOU ASK ME, THAT SOUNDS TOTALLY IM-POSSIBLE!!

. . . . . !!

. . . . . .

WHAT'S WITH YOU? YOU'RE ACTING REALLY WEIRD.

SHUT UP, JUST LEAVE ME ALONE!!

YOU ARE SUCH AN IDIOT!!

WHAT!?

HEY, ASA-HINA!!

COME ON!!

AH...

GO AHEAD, RUN HOWEVER YOU WANT. I COULD CARE LESS.

WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT ABOUT...

N-NO WE DON'T!!

ARE YOU GUYS FIGHTING AGAIN?

YOU GUYS MUST REALLY HATE EACH OTHER.

SHE'S TOTALLY NUTS...AS USUAL...

WHOOSH

12.99 SECONDS.

CLICK

SHIT, I'M SUPPOSED TO BE GETTING FASTER, NOT SLOWER.

FWUMP

SHOCK

LOOK.

ARE YOU SERI-OUS!?

.....

WHAT DO YOU EXPECT? DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW MUCH YOU'VE RUN SO FAR TODAY?

YOU'D BETTER STOP NOW.

FWICK

ALL RIGHT, JUST ONE MORE TIME!!

PLEASE!!

GEEZ!!

ARE YOU REALLY SORRY, OR ARE YOU JUST SAYING THAT.

OF COURSE I'M SORRY.

SORRY FOR MAKING YOU DO THIS WITH ME. YOU'RE THE ONLY PERSON I COULD ASK.

OKAY FINE, ONE MORE TIME.

ALL RIGHT!

FWIP

ONE LAST TIME!

HEY...

WHAT?

OH... REALLY?

WHAT HAS GOTTEN INTO YOU LATELY...? YOU SEEM KIND OF DIFFERENT.

YOU'VE CHANGED A LOT SINCE WE PRACTICED WITH THE BATON THAT TIME.

I WANT TO BE NUMBER ONE.

I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY, BUT I DO FEEL LIKE I HAVE A CLEAR GOAL NOW.

I WANT TO BEAT ARIMA, AND BECOME THE NUMBER ONE RUNNER IN JAPAN!!

WHAT GOAL?

WELL, I'M PRETTY SURE YOU'VE GOT WHAT IT TAKES TO MAKE THAT DREAM A REALITY, BUT...

. . . . . .

WHAT WAS IT...?

DOES IT REALLY MATTER?

HUH...

WHAT HAPPENED? WHAT WAS IT THAT SUDDENLY MADE YOU WANNA BE NUMBER ONE...?

IS IT BECAUSE...

...YOU STILL LIKE SUZUKA?

AM I WRONG?

I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT.

I WANT TO MAKE IT TO NUMBER ONE, AND THEN I'LL TRY TELLING HER HOW I FEEL AGAIN.

I KNOW THAT.

LISTEN, IT'S NOT LIKE SUZUKA'S GONNA AUTOMATICALLY FALL FOR YOU JUST BECAUSE YOU TAKE FIRST PLACE.

WHAT...?

AND THAT'S NOT EVEN WHAT I MEANT.

ASAHINA'S NOT LIKE THAT.

I JUST WON'T FEEL LIKE I'M ASAHINA'S EQUAL.

IT'S JUST THAT UNLESS I REACH THAT GOAL, I FEEL LIKE I WON'T BE ABLE TO MOVE FORWARD, YOU KNOW.

. . . . . .

UH-HUH.

YOU SHOULD AT LEAST BUY ME DINNER.

OTHERWISE, WHAT DO I GET OUT OF ALL THIS?

OKAY, OKAY. DO YOU WANT TO GO OUT FOR *OKONOMIYAKI* LATER?

NO!! I WANT SOMETHING MORE EXPENSIVE!!

WHAT ARE YOU SO MAD ABOUT...

THAT'S IT. I'VE HAD ENOUGH. QUIT TRYING TO SUCK ME INTO YOUR DRAMA.

AH... HASHIBA.

BANG

I'M NOT MAD!!

...NUMBER ONE...

I WANT TO BE...

SERIOUSLY, WHAT IS HE THINKING?

GOD! WHAT'S HIS DEAL?!

SUZUKA

#64 Encouragement

WOO

OKAY!!

WOO

OKAY, LAST LAP!! GIVE IT ALL YOU'VE GOT, AKITSUKI!!

BIII

P

WHOOSH

P

. . . . . .

AKITSUKI? CAN I TALK TO YOU FOR A MINUTE?

PHEW!! IT'S FINALLY OVER!!

OKAY! THREE MINUTE BREAK!!

I WAS LOOKING AT YOUR TIMES FROM YESTERDAY.

FLIP

I MADE A GRAPH SHOWING YOUR TIMES FROM THE PAST WEEK AND...

NO. LOOK AT THIS.

YOU WERE PRACTICING PRETTY HARD, SO YOUR SPEED WENT DOWN A BIT, BUT...

THE CURVE HERE SHOWS THAT YOUR SPEED IS GETTING PRETTY CLOSE TO MATCHING ARIMA'S.

I-IS THERE A PROB-LEM...

...WITH THE WAY I RUN?

A-ALL RIGHT. I'LL DO MY BEST!!

OKAY, JUST DON'T PUSH YOURSELF TOO HARD, OKAY?

YEP. AT THIS RATE, YOU MIGHT HAVE THE NEW STYLE DOWN IN TIME FOR THE BIG RACE.

WHAT? SERI-OUSLY!?

AH...

MIYAMOTO-SENPAI JUST TOLD ME THAT...

FWOOSH

MY FORM IS GETTING BETTER!!

ASAHINA!

WELL, YOU CAN DO EVERYTHING RIGHT AT PRACTICE...

...AND STILL MESS UP WHEN IT COUNTS, YOU KNOW? HAPPENS ALL THE TIME.

YOU MIGHT BE DOING WELL RIGHT NOW, BUT...

DON'T LET IT GET TO YOUR HEAD.

AH...

AH...! HEY, ASAHINA.

SWIP

YEAH, BUT...

CLOP

カッツ...

CLOP

カツ...

WHAT IS HER PROBLEM?

DID SHE HAVE TO PUT IT LIKE THAT...

LISTEN, IT'S NOT LIKE SUZUKA'S GONNA

...AUTOMATICALLY FALL FOR YOU JUST BECAUSE YOU TAKE FIRST PLACE...

I KNOW, BUT...

. . . . . .

TCH, SHE DOESN'T EVEN HAVE A CLUE...

YEAH! ガッ

F-FORGET IT, I'VE JUST GOTTA KEEP TRAINING!!

THAT'S ALL I CAN DO RIGHT NOW!!

WHY I'M OUT HERE TRYING SO HARD EVERY DAY?

ALL RIGHT. THAT'S IT FOR TODAY!!

EVERY-BODY MAKE SURE TO DO A COOL DOWN BE-FORE YOU LEAVE!!

OKAY!!

CHATTER

CHATTER

HEY, LET'S GO TO MICKEY D'S!!

AHHH, ALL DONE.

AKITSUKI, WANNA GO GRAB A BITE WITH ME? MY TREAT.

I'M GONNA PRACTICE A LITTLE BIT LONGER.

AH... SORRY.

DON'T WORRY!!

WELL, WE'VE ONLY GOT THREE MORE DAYS TO GO TILL THE TOUR-NAMENT, SO...

JUST DON'T OVERDO IT. I DON'T WANNA SEE YOU HURT YOURSELF.

...OKAY.

ALL RIGHT... TIME TO GET STARTED!

AH... ASAHINA, ARE YOU GONNA STAY LATE AND PRACTICE, TOO?

COOL! HANG IN THERE!

CLINK

I WOULDN'T WASTE MY TIME TRYING TO CHEER ON OTHER PEOPLE LIKE THAT IF I WERE YOU, YAMATO-KUN.

DON'T YOU HAVE MORE IMPORTANT THINGS TO CONCENTRATE ON?

WHAT...?

HUH...

. . . . . .

WHAT DID I DO...?

HAHHH

I DON'T GET HER AT ALL.

.....

IF YOU'RE NOT CAREFUL YOU'RE GONNA FORGET EVERYTHING YOU'VE LEARNED, AND...

...FALL RIGHT BACK INTO YOUR OLD RUNNING STYLE.

WHOOSH

4"

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ン

DONG

カ

ン

DING

GASP

GLANCE

TAPPA

TAPPA

I'M DOING THE BEST I CAN, AND SHE KEEPS SAYING STUFF LIKE THAT.

SHIT, SHE REALLY PISSES ME OFF.

I'M BETTER OFF NOT EVEN TALKING TO HER. THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT SHE'LL SAY NEXT...

I'LL JUST DO MY OWN THING...

HEY!!

ASA-HINA...

HOW LONG ARE YOU GONNA BE HERE?

UH... WH-WHAT IS IT?

WHY DON'T YOU JUST GO HOME ALREADY?

DON'T YOU KNOW ANY-THING?

IF YOU JUST KEEP RUNNING AND RUNNING LIKE THAT, YOU'RE GONNA END UP DOING MORE HARM THAN GOOD.

WHAT...?

I DON'T TRUST A WORD YOU SAY.

YOU ARE SO FULL OF IT.

I-I'M BEING REALLY CAREFUL ABOUT MY RUNNING.

IS THAT SO?

SNAP

WHAT THE FUCK IS YOUR PROBLEM?

WHAT DID I DO TO DESERVE THIS BULLSHIT?

WHAT...

...BUT YOU JUST CAN'T KEEP YOUR BIG MOUTH SHUT.

GRRIP

YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW WHY I'VE BEEN TRYING SO HARD...

AH...

FUCK THIS! I'M GOING HOME.

STOMP

STOMP

W-WAIT A MINUTE!!

UMM...

STEP

HEY...

HEY!!

STEP

WHAT...?

JUST WAIT A SEC...

. . . . . .

UH...

I'M SORRY... I DIDN'T MEAN TO BE LIKE THAT.

SO PLEASE...

DON'T BE MAD.

I'M NOT... REALLY... MAD OR ANYTHING...

AH...NO...

Y-
YEAH.

I'M
FINE...

OH...
GOOD...

FWIPPA

WELL, GOOD LUCK AT THE CHAMPION-SHIPS!!

AH...

HEY!!

GOOD LUCK...?

I DON'T NEED LUCK.

I'M GONNA BE NUMBER ONE NO MATTER WHAT!!

WOO

WOO

WOO

STEP

STEP

2004

Tokyo

High

School

District

Championships

SUZUKA

ALL RIGHT!!

#65 Pitfall

HUH...?

AH...I'M GETTING SO NERVOUS!

W-WELL, THIS IS THE DISTRICT CHAMPION-SHIP!!

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO BE NERVOUS ABOUT?

IF YOU'RE SO CURIOUS, WHY DON'T YOU...

...TRY COM-PETING YOUR-SELF?

I WONDER WHAT IT'S LIKE...

...TO BE RUNNING IN SUCH A BIG COMPETITION!

YOU'RE SO MEAN.

THAT'S WHY...

...GIRLS DIG ME SO MUCH.

YOU ARE SUCH AN IDIOT.

I CAN'T BELIEVE HE'S RUNNING IN SUCH A BIG RACE.

YAMATO'S REALLY MADE SOME PROGRESS.

AKIT-SUKI!!

ARE YOU ALL READY FOR THE RACE?

UH... YES.

WELL...I WONDER...

D-DON'T WORRY.

ARE YOU SURE? USUALLY, YOU FORGET SOME IMPORTANT DETAIL.

...HOW HE'LL SCREW THINGS UP THIS TIME.

HUH...?

MUMBLE (ぼそ)

OKAY...

HOW BOR-ING...

ALL RIGHT.

I GUESS THAT'LL BE OKAY....

AH...I'M GONNA GO WITH THE ONE I'VE BEEN WORKING ON.

BY THE WAY, AKITSUKI... WHAT RUNNING STYLE ARE YOU GONNA USE TODAY?

136

UM...

NEVER MIND, IT'S NOTHING.

UH...I-IS THERE A PROBLEM?

OKAY...

WELL, I'M GONNA GO GET A DRINK.

YOU'LL BE RUNNING THREE TIMES THIS WEEKEND, INCLUDING THE FINAL RACE.

JUST DON'T OVER-EXERT YOURSELF, ALL RIGHT?

I KNOW, I KNOW!

.....

I GET NERVOUS JUST THINKING ABOUT IT...

THESE ARE THE DISTRICT CHAMPION-SHIPS. THAT MEANS I'LL DEFINITELY BE RUNNING AGAINST ARIMA IN THE FINAL RACE.

KIRIN

KIRIN

I'M GONNA BEAT HIM AND BECOME NUMBER ONE IN THE NATION!

N-NO! I CAN'T GIVE IN TO FEAR!!

KA-LUNK

POCARI SWEAT

THEN I'LL MARCH RIGHT UP TO ASAHINA AND TELL HER HOW I REALLY FEEL.

.....

I JUST HOPE...

SHUDDER

ズ"ーン

...SHE DOESN'T TURN ME DOWN AGAIN.

I'M SORRY... I DIDN'T MEAN TO BE LIKE THAT...

SO PLEASE... DON'T BE MAD.

FWIPPA

WELL, GOOD LUCK AT THE CHAMPION-SHIPS!!

.....

...THANKS.

ATTENTION PLEASE. THIS IS THE FINAL CALL FOR THE MEN'S 100-METER RACE!!

ALL RUNNERS PLEASE COME TO THE TRACK IMMEDIATELY.

FOR SOME REASON, I JUST FEEL LIKE THINGS ARE GONNA WORK OUT THIS TIME.

...HE HASN'T BEEN ABLE TO MEET OR BEAT HIS RE-CORD FROM THE LAST COMPETI-TION.

WELL, SINCE HE CHANGED HIS RUNNING STYLE...

HIS TIME IS GETTING WORSE?

YEAH. THE SPEED BAR IS PRETTY MUCH PERFECT, BUT...

THAT'S WEIRD.

THE GRAPH IS LOOKING GOOD, RIGHT?

....HE'S NOT ACCEL-ERATING ENOUGH AT THE START.

I THINK HE'S CONCENTRAT-ING SO HARD ON TRYING TO REACH TOP SPEED TOWARD THE END, THAT...

0
20
40
60
80

THAT'S AN INTER-ESTING DILEMMA.

MOST PEOPLE TAKE TOO LONG TO REACH THEIR MAXIMUM VELOCITY.

BUT HE'S THE TOTAL OPPOSITE.

AKITSUKI COULD STICK TO HIS OLD STYLE AND STILL COMPETE AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL.

BUT HE'LL NEVER MAKE IT TO THE TOP WITH THAT STYLE.

HE HAS WHAT IT TAKES TO BE NUMBER ONE IN THE NATION.

.....

SO, IF HE'S REALLY IN IT FOR THE LONG HAUL, IT'S WORTH IT FOR HIM...

AND HE SAID HE WANTS TO BE...

...TO CHANGE HIS STYLE, EVEN IF IT MEANS LOSING TO ARIMA THIS TIME.

I JUST HAVE THIS FEELING THAT...

...HE COULD BE...

HEH, WELL...

SLAP

NOW YOU'RE REALLY STARTING TO SOUND LIKE A CAPTAIN, MIYAMOTO.

NUMBER 1021, OKAJIMA-KUN!

HERE!!

NUM-BER 4129, TAKA-HASHI-KUN!

RIGHT HERE!

...EVEN BETTER THAN KAZUKI TSUDA.

YOU'RE IN GROUP NUMBER ONE AGAIN, HUH?

TRY NOT TO FALL THIS TIME.

I KNOW!

136

136

STEP

STEP

LET'S GET THIS STARTED!

GROUP NUMBER ONE, PLEASE LINE UP!!

GOTTEN ANY BETTER IN THESE LAST TWO WEEKS?

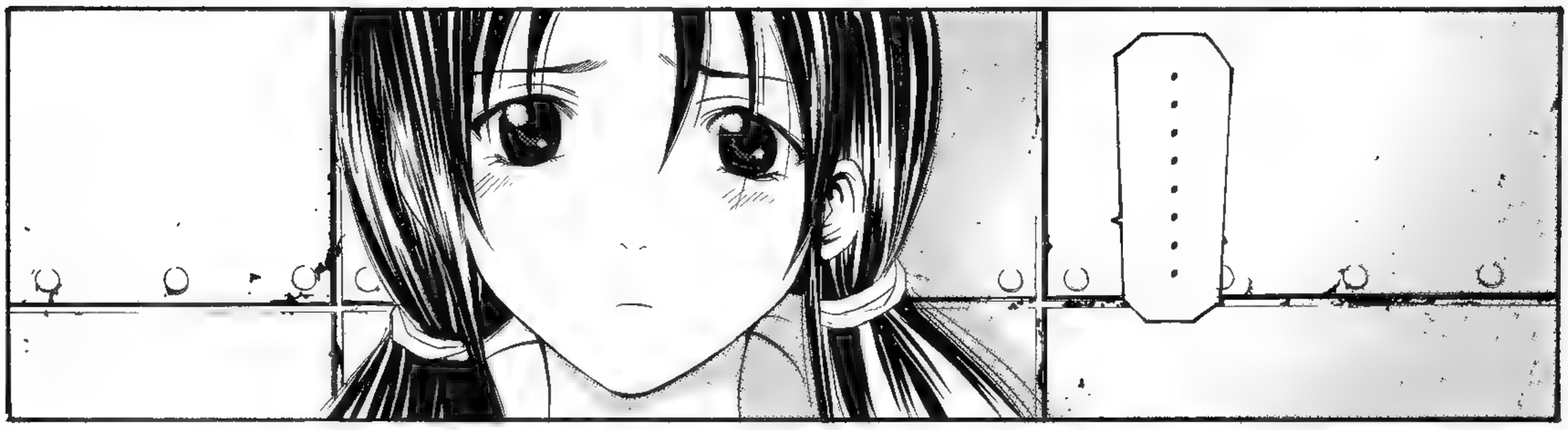
HUH, LITTLE AKITSUKI-KUN?

YOU JUST WAIT AND SEE...!

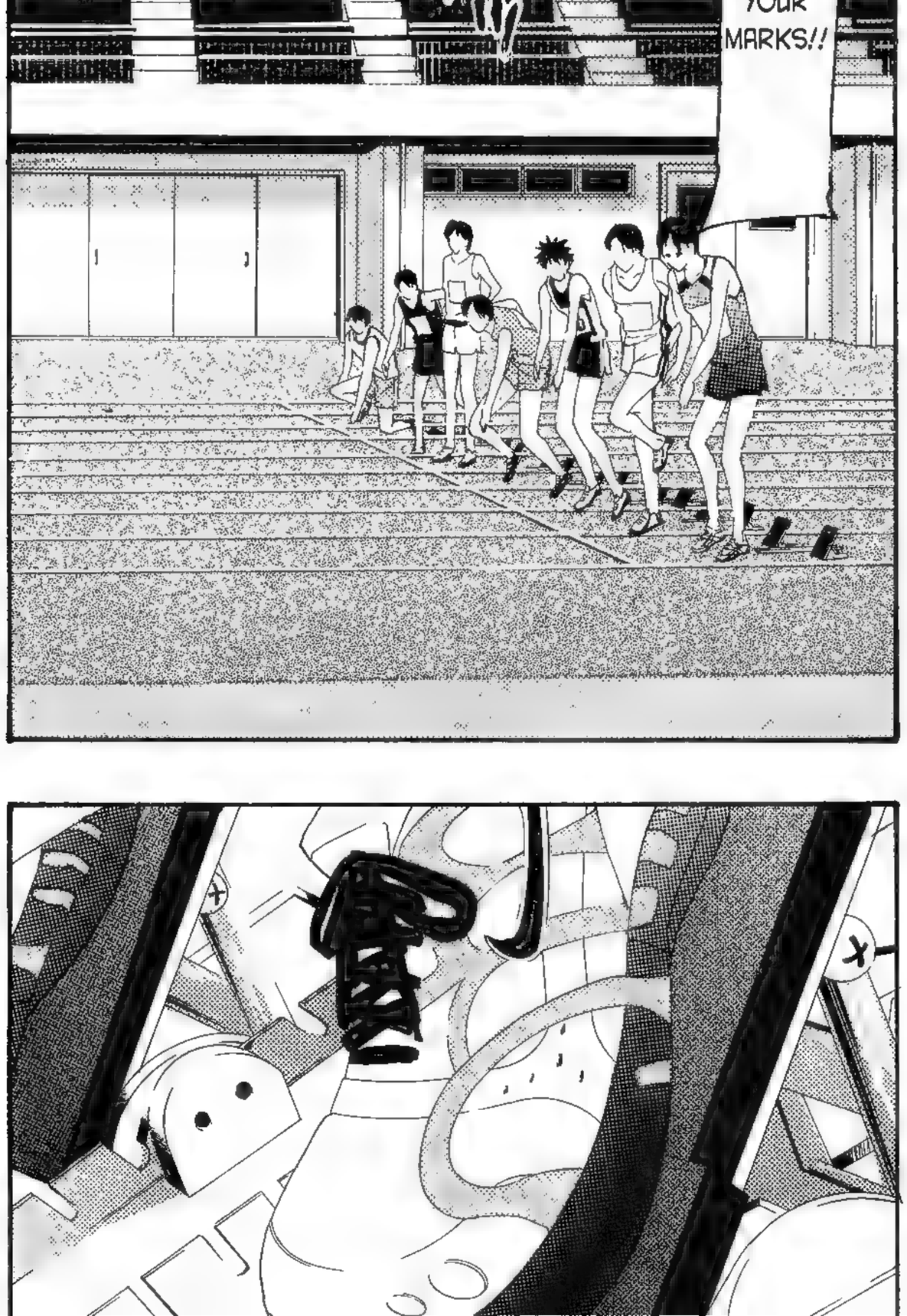
HUH...

136

OH MY GOD. I'M SO NER-VOUS!!
AH! LOOK'S LIKE YAMATO'S UP NEXT.



F.WICK
ON YOUR MARKS!!



NOW I JUST HAVE TO GIVE IT ALL I'VE GOT!

I DID EV-ERYTHING I COULD TO GET READY FOR THIS...

I AM GOING TO BE NUMBER ONE, NO MATTER WHAT...

GET SET!!

CLICKA

NISHI

I'M GONNA TELL ASAHINA HOW I FEEL ALL OVER AGAIN!!

BANG

136

ALL RIGHT...

HE'S OFF TO A GOOD START.

NOW COMES THE REAL TEST.

H-HEY, HE'S LETTING EVERY-BODY CATCH UP!!

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING, AKIT-SUKI?

WHOOSH

...IF HE'S ON HIS WAY TO BEATING ARIMA...

WE'LL SEE...

NOT YET...!

NOT YET...

STILL GOTTA KEEP MY SPEED DOWN...

136

AND THE WINNER OF THE MEN'S 100-METER DASH IS...

WOO

WOO

EMERSON ARIMA!!

WOO

. . . . . .

WOO

WELL...

THESE THINGS HAPPEN.

YEAH...

WOO

MEN'S TRACK

MEN 100-METER FINAL GROUP NUMBER ONE

NAME	GRADE	DIVISION	LANE	RANKING	TIME
TOMOFUMI MATSUOKA	SOPHO-MORE	1	2	First place	11.04 seconds
HIRONORI MIYAZAKI	SOPHO-MORE	6	4	Second place	11.45 seconds
TETSUSHI GOMI	SOPHO-MORE	2	6	Third place	11.51 seconds
YAMATO AKITSUKI	FRESH-MAN	3	3	Fourth place	11.70 seconds
	FRESH-MAN	5	1	Fifth place	11.99 seconds
	SOPHO-MORE	1	5	Sixth place	12.01 seconds

BUT...

I'M JUST SURPRISED THAT AKITSUKI FINISHED MORE THAN A SECOND SHORT OF HIS BEST TIME...

AND I CAN'T BELIEVE HE DIDN'T EVEN QUALIFY.

#66 Miscalculation

SUZUKA

WOO

WOO

STEP
STEP

AKIT-
SUKI...

A-ABOUT
YESTER-
DAY'S
RACE...

YOU
KNOW...

WHAT...?

I'M
SORRY...

I KNEW THAT EVERYBODY WAS CATCHING UP WITH ME, BUT I JUST COULDN'T GET MY SPEED UP.

MY MIND JUST WENT TOTALLY BLANK WHEN I WAS RUNNING.

WE'LL REALLY TAKE OUR TIME AND WORK ON IT OVER THE SUMMER.

NO...IT WAS MY FAULT.

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO CHANGE YOUR RUNNING FORM IN JUST TWO WEEKS.

HE'S PROBABLY TOO BUSY GETTING READY FOR THE 200-METER FINAL.

HE'S NOT THE TYPE TO DWELL ON STUFF LIKE THAT.

IT'D BE OKAY IF IT WERE JUST THE 100-METER DASH, BUT...

...IT HAPPENED IN THE RELAY, TOO...

I GOT A LATE START, AND THEN I DROPPED THE BATON... SASAKI-SENPAI MUST BE PISSED.

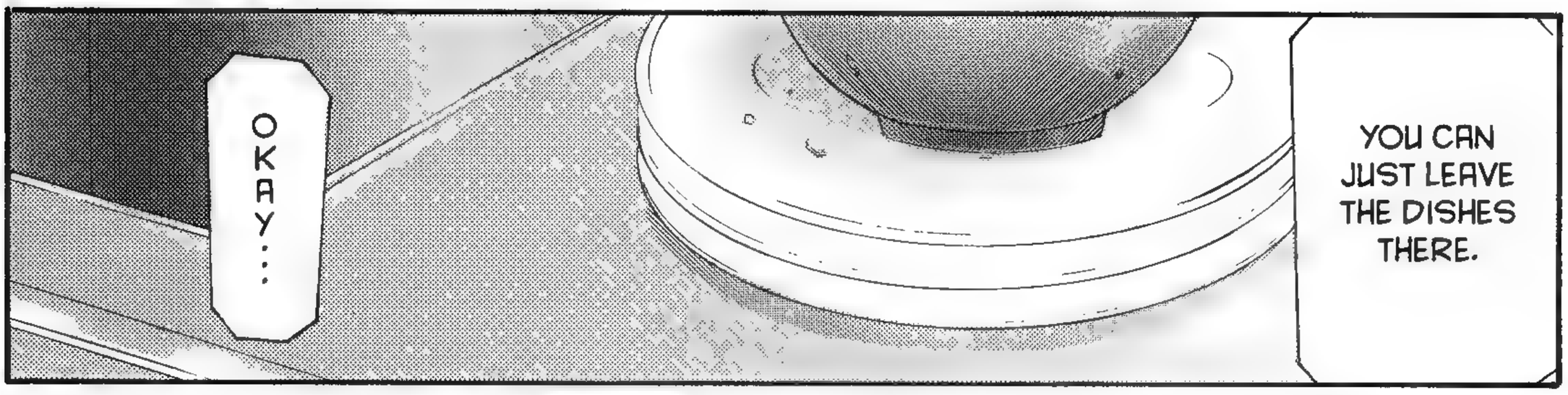
SO WHY DON'T YOU JUST FORGET ABOUT IT, AND START THINKING ABOUT WHAT'S NEXT.

THANKS.

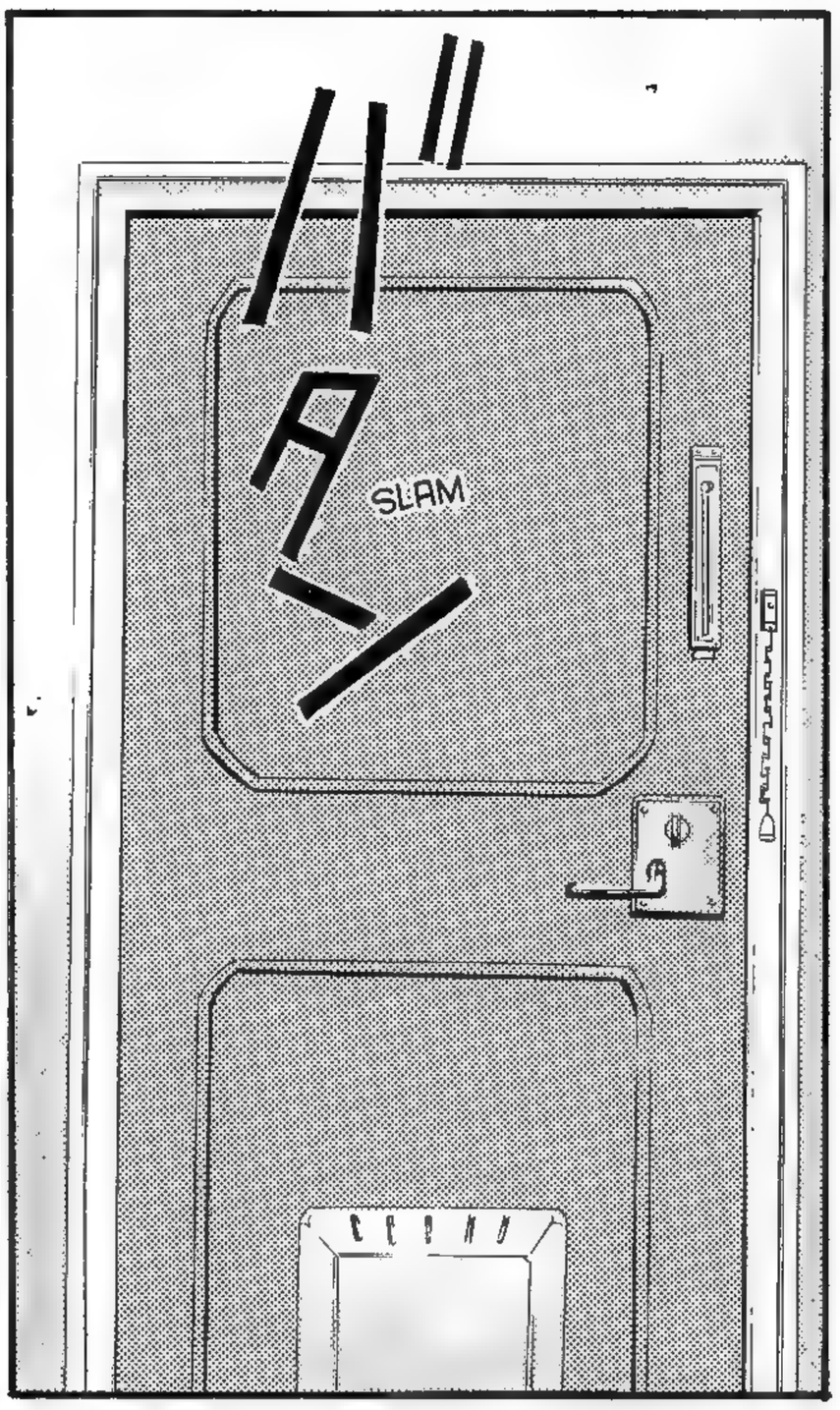
カチャ
CLINK
カチャ
CLINK
ASAHIYU BATHS
I WENT TO GET HIM, BUT HE SAID HE DIDN'T NEED DINNER.
MIHO, WILL YOU GO GET YAMATO-KUN? I CAN'T CLEAR THE TABLE TILL HE EATS.
SLURP
. . . . . .
HE DIDN'T WANT DINNER? ...BUT HE HARDLY ATE ANYTHING THIS MORNING.
HE WAS REALLY GIVING IT HIS ALL...
I GUESS HE'S TAKING YESTER-DAY'S LOSS PRETTY HARD.
IS HE OKAY...?

コト
CLINK

WHAT?
OH... SURE, OF COURSE.
CLANK
カチャ
THANKS FOR DINNER.


OKAY...
YOU CAN JUST LEAVE THE DISHES THERE.

YEAH. THEY MUST BE FIGHTING AGAIN OR SOMETHING.
RIGHT? GORO-CHAN.
SUZUKA'S ACTING KINDA WEIRD, TOO.
10
MEOW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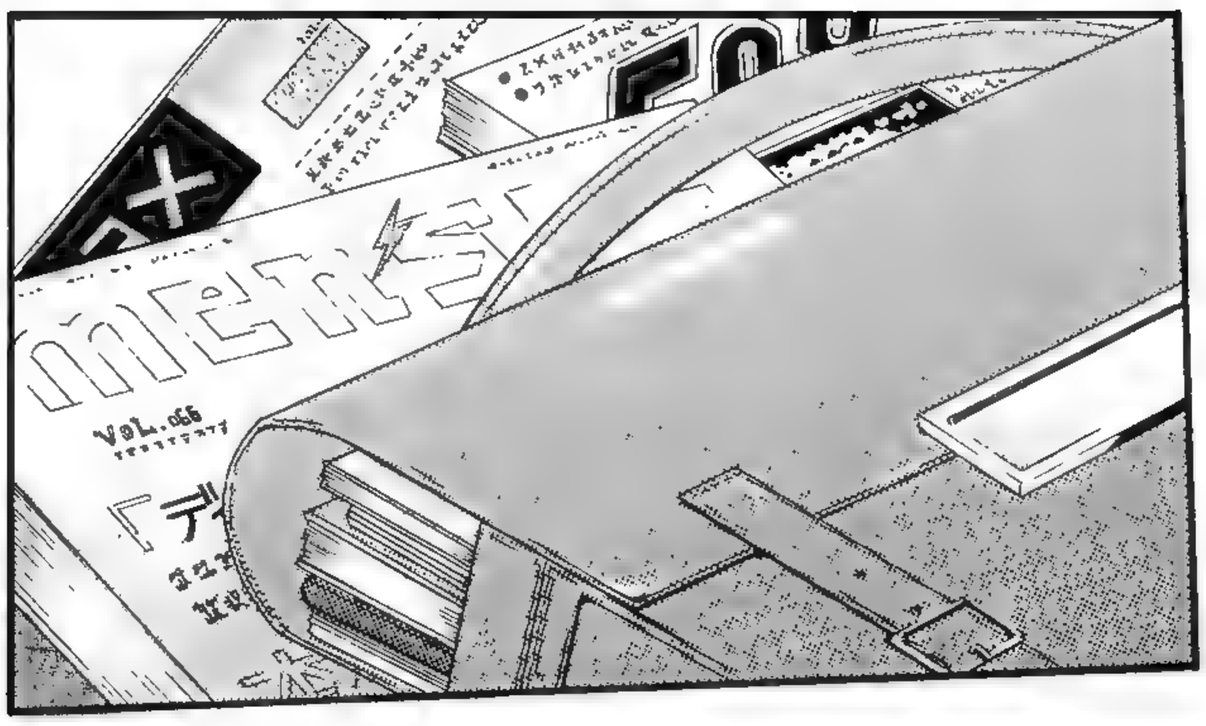
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301
NHK
3.5
YAMATO AKITSUKI

IT WAS ONLY YOUR THIRD TOURNA-MENT.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, MAN

SOMETIMES GREAT RUNNERS END UP NOT QUALIFYING, YOU KNOW. IT HAPPENS.
SO, YOUR TIME DROPPED A BIT, IT'S NO BIG DEAL.

THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M BUMMED ABOUT...
. . . . . .

GOOD LUCK AT THE CHAMPIONSHIPS!!

WELL...

PATHETIC! PATHETIC! I AM SO FUCKING PATHETIC!

FLAPPA

FLAPPA

AHHH!

GODAM-MIT!!

FWUMP

THERE'S NO WAY I CAN TELL HER HOW I FEEL NOW. I'M TOO ASHAMED TO EVEN LOOK HER IN THE EYE.

AFTER SHE GAVE ME ALL THAT ENCOUR-AGEMENT!

SHE'S PROBABLY TOTALLY DIS-APPOINTED IN ME.

WHO THE HELL COULD THAT BE...

WHAT?

CLICK

DING DONG

...HUH?

A-
ASAHINA!

WHAT IS IT...!?

HUH!? UH, UMM... MY ROOM'S KINDA MESSY...

CAN I COME IN?

THAT'S OKAY, I JUST WANNA USE YOUR KITCHEN FOR A SECOND.

MY KITCHEN?

FOR THIS.

RUSTLE

WHY ARE YOU GONNA BOIL ALL OF 'EM?

BECAUSE, THAT'S THE ONLY WAY I KNOW HOW TO MAKE EGGS.

I'M GONNA MAKE A DOZEN HARD-BOILED EGGS. YOU CAN HAVE HALF OF THEM, YAMATO-KUN.

I GOT THESE EGGS ON SALE AT THE STORE, BUT I CAN'T EAT THEM ALL ON MY OWN.

NO WAY. I'M TRYING TO SAVE MONEY ON MY GAS BILL.

WHAT'S WITH ALL THESE DIRTY DISHES? GEEZ, GET YOUR ACT TOGETHER.

WELL, WHY DON'T YOU JUST DO IT IN YOUR ROOM?

カチャ CLINK

UM...I... DON'T HAVE A MICRO-WAVE, YOU KNOW...?

I KNOW HOW TO MAKE HARD-BOILED EGGS.

AH... SORRY...

WHAT DID I DO WRONG THIS TIME...?

CLINK
CLINK
CLINK
CLINK
CLINK
CLINK
CLINK
TSSSHHHH
U-
UH...
QUIT STANDING AROUND.
WHY DON'T YOU JUST SIT DOWN?
WHAT!? UH, YEAH, IT'S ON THE TOP SHELF.
HEY, YOU GOT ANY SALT?
SUD-DENLY SHE JUST HAS TO MAKE HARD-BOILED EGGS...?
WHAT THE HELL IS SHE DOING HERE?

HUH?

YOU KNOW WHAT...

I NEVER UNDER-STOOD HER ANY-WAY.

WELL, WHAT-EVER...

I ALWAYS FELT LIKE I WAS UNDER TONS OF PRESSURE, AND I'D LET ALL THESE LITTLE THINGS GET TO ME.

AFTER I STARTED TRACK, IT TOOK ME THREE YEARS BEFORE I EVEN QUALIFIED FOR THE PREFECTURAL TOURNAMENT.

カチッ SNAP

I MADE IT TO THE NATIONALS. THERE WERE EVEN SOME HIGH SCHOOL TRACK SCOUTS THERE JUST TO SEE ME.

BUT I DIDN'T GIVE UP. I KEPT PRACTICING, AND AT THE BIG TOURNAMENT, DURING MY LAST YEAR OF JUNIOR HIGH, I SET A RECORD, AND...

WH-WHY ARE YOU TELLING ME THIS ALL OF A SUDDEN?

S-SHUT UP. I WAS JUST REMEMBER-ING STUFF... GEEZ...

.....

I GUESS I WAS PRETTY GOOD...

...TRYING TO CHEER ME UP?

IS SHE...

NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, WHENEVER SOMETHING BAD HAPPENS TO ME...

I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT WANNA TRY MY HOMEMADE TAMAGOZAKE DRINK AND HARD-BOILED EGGS.

YOU DON'T TAKE IT SERIOUSLY ENOUGH.

YOU HAVE TO TAKE TIME TO STRETCH AFTER EVERY PRACTICE.

...I DON'T MIND

BUT I GUESS YOU'RE ALREADY FULL FROM SAKURAI-SAN'S DINNER.

I'M GOING OUT TOMORROW ANYWAYS SO...

...I CAN HANG OUT WITH YOU A LITTLE ON THE WAY BACK.

HERE, YOU CAN BORROW MY UMBRELLA...

...COMING ALONG WITH YOU.

W-WHAT...?

TH-THAT'S NOT WHY I'M HERE.

BLUSH

WHAT!?

N-NOTH-ING.

THANKS... ...FOR COMING OVER TO CHEER ME UP.

YOU'RE RIGHT...

SHE'S ALWAYS LIKE THIS.

I TOLD YOU THAT I HAD SOME EXTRA EGGS, THAT'S ALL.

DON'T GET THE WRONG IDEA.

I-I'M NOT G-GRIN-NING.

HEY... WHAT'RE YOU GRIN-NING ABOUT?

AH... OKAY

TCH...

THUMP THUMP

YOU ARE SUCH A WEIRDO.

THERE'S NO DENYING IT. I...

AH...!

CLOPPA

WELL, I'M GOING BACK TO MY ROOM.

JUST TURN OFF THE STOVE WHEN THEY'RE READY.

CLOPPA

I'M STILL IN LOVE WITH...

CLICK

...

I'M STILL IN LOVE WITH YOU, ASAHINA!

WHAT...

I WAS PLANNING TO TELL YOU THAT...

IF I WON THE TOURNAMENT YESTERDAY...

BLOOP

BLOOP

BLOOP

AH...!

WELL, I'M GOING BACK TO MY ROOM.

JUST TURN OFF THE STOVE WHEN THEY'RE READY.

I-I'M STILL IN LOVE WITH...

カチ

CLICK

チャ

...

I'M STILL IN LOVE WITH YOU, ASAHINA!

SUZUKA

#67 Disappearance

WHAT...

IF I WON THE TOURNAMENT YESTERDAY...

I WAS PLANNING TO TELL YOU THAT...

BLOOP

BLOOP

WHAT...

LOOK...

WHAT ARE YOU—?

YOU DON'T NEED TO GIVE ME AN ANSWER RIGHT AWAY OR ANYTHING...

WHAT...

ドキン！ THUMP THUMP

I...I'M GONNA KEEP TRAINING AND GET WAY FASTER THAN I AM NOW.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO SAY ANYTHING RIGHT NOW...

SO...

...I BECOME NUMBER ONE IN THE NATION, THEN...

AFTER...

...THEN YOU CAN—

WHEN I WIN THE NEXT CHAMPIONSHIP...

HH SHIVER

THEN YOU CAN TELL ME HOW YOU FEEL...

SHUT UP!!

H-HEY...

DID I SAY SOMETHING WEIRD...?

AH....!

ASA-HINA!!

CLICK

HEY, ASAHINA!!

I SAID...

...SHUT UP...

CLOPPA

CLOPPA

SIGH...

301

YAMATO AKITSUK

SNNF

SHOT DOWN...

...AGAIN.

ドン

DING DOING

FUCK IT! I DON'T CARE. I DON'T GIVE A SHIT ABOUT ANYTHING ANYMORE...

うおおおおおん

AHHHHHHH

AND THIS TIME SHE EVEN TOLD ME TO SHUT UP—!!!

NOT, "SORRY, BUT..." NOT "I'M FLATTERED, BUT..." JUST "SHUT UP"!

...!!

C-COULD THAT BE ASAHINA...?

FWUP

Y-YES!!

MIHO-CHAN.

WHAT'S THE MATTER? YOUR EYES ARE RED...

I-I WAS JUST SLEEPING, THAT'S ALL!!

WHAT IS IT!?

I WAS GOING TO ASK SUZUKA-SAN FOR HELP WITH MY HOMEWORK...

BUT SHE'S NOT IN HER ROOM, SO I GOT KINDA WORRIED...

OH...

I THOUGHT SHE MIGHT BE IN YOUR ROOM, SO...

N-NO... SHE'S NOT HERE...

NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, I HAVEN'T HEARD HER DOOR OPEN OR CLOSE SINCE SHE LEFT HERE.

S-SHE PROB-ABLY WENT SHOPPING OR SOME-THING.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.

I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT.

SHE'S NOT A LITTLE KID.

OKAY.

OKAY, I'LL GO ASK MEGUMI-SAN TO HELP ME INSTEAD!

SORRY I WOKE YOU UP..

302

SUZUKA ASAHINA

D-DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.

チッ
TIC
チッ
TOC

GOOD NIGHT.

SEE YA!

GOOD NIGHT, YAMATO-KUN.

IF SHE'D JUST GONE OUT SHOPPING, SHE'D BE BACK BY NOW...

IT'S BEEN AN HOUR SINCE SHE LEFT...

C — G
3 — 1

THE HIROSHIMA CARP HAVE A CHANCE TO SCORE ANOTHER RUN WITH TOP HITTER OGATA STEPPING UP TO THE PLATE!

WOO

WOO

TWO OUTS AND RUNNERS ON SECOND AND THIRD...

TOP OF THE 7TH

IT'S NOT MY PROBLEM...

ASAHIYU BATHS

. . . . . .

TICK TOCK

TICK

TOCK

SQUIRM SQUIRM

...SHUT UP!

I SAID...

IT'S PROBABLY BECAUSE OF WHAT I SAID...

SOME-THING'S NOT RIGHT!! IT'S ALREADY NINE O'CLOCK!

FWUP

WHAT THE HELL IS ASAHINA DOING!?

PAUSE

STEP

STEP

SUZUKA?

STEP

STEP

SHE LEFT HER APARTMENT AND SHE STILL HASN'T COME BACK. IT'S BEEN TWO WHOLE HOURS. SHE'S NOT ANSWERING HER CELL PHONE EITHER...

I THOUGHT SHE MIGHT BE AT YOUR PLACE...

NOPE. SHE'S NOT HERE...

IS SOMETHING WRONG?

WHAT? ARE YOU GUYS FIGHTING AGAIN?

N-NO...

I'LL GO LOOK FOR HER, TOO.

FINE...

AH... WAIT!

TAAPPA

TALK TO YOU LATER!!

WELL, NEVER MIND. I'M JUST GOING TO LOOK FOR HER A BIT AROUND HERE.

OUR CHANCES OF FINDING HER ARE BETTER IF WE BOTH LOOK, RIGHT?

ASAHIY

OH...BUT...

ASAHIYU BATHS

OKAY, THANKS.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. I'LL CALL YOU IF I FIND HER.

SHIT...I JUST TOOK A BATH AND NOW I'M GONNA GET ALL SWEATY AGAIN.

S-SORRY... I'LL BUY YOU DINNER.

HMMPH!

. . . . . .

SHIT, WHAT THE HELL IS SHE THINKING!?

ALL I DID WAS TELL HER HOW I FELT ABOUT HER. WHY DID SHE HAVE TO GO RUNNING OFF LIKE THAT?

SAKURAI

MOM, I'M GONNA GO TO THE STORE.

I DON'T SEE WHY WE EVEN BOTHER LOCKING IT. THERE'S NOTHING THERE WORTH STEALING...

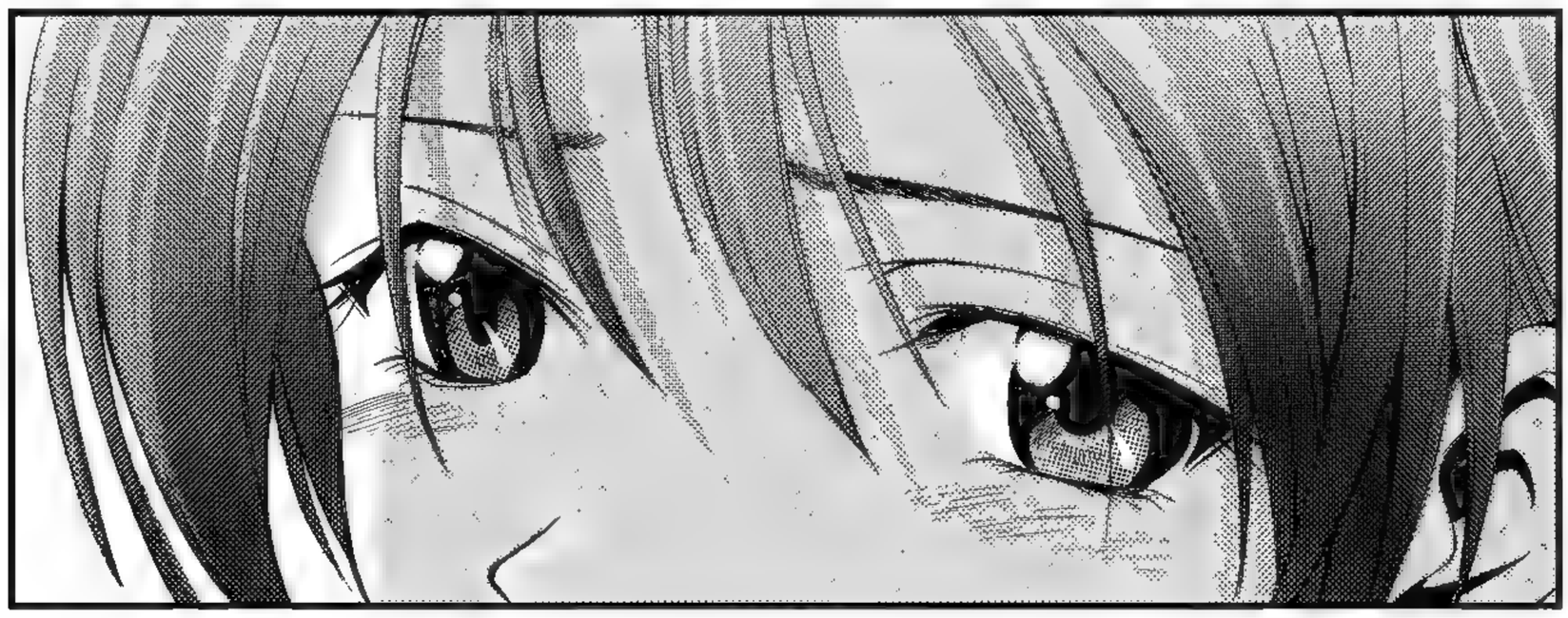
ガラッ
SLIDE

AH, HONOKA. SINCE YOU'RE GOING OUT, WILL YOU LOCK THE SHRINE GATE?

カラン・
CLOP CLOP

OKAY.

ASAHINA-SAN...?



AFTER I BECOME NUMBER ONE IN THE NATION...

SUZUKA

#68 Loss

TWO YEARS AGO

TSUDA?

ASAHINA

WOO

OH YEAH...

YEAH. HE'S GONNA BE IN THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS TOMORROW!

WOO

FLAPPA FLAPPA

WELL...

DON'T YOU THINK THAT'S AWESOME?

. . . . . .

AND...?

BECAUSE HIS TIME IS REALLY GOOD RIGHT NOW, AND...HE SAID HE WAS GONNA TAKE FIRST PLACE...

IT'S NOT LIKE IT'S HIS FIRST TIME.

WHY DO YOU EVEN CARE?

W-WELL...

...LIKE HIM OR SOMETHING?

DO YOU...

OF COURSE... HOW COULD YOU? HE'S LIKE A LITTLE KID.

HE'S NOT EVEN THAT CUTE!

ドキ

BLUSH

...WHAT!?

N-NO WAY!

W-
WHAT...?

A-
HA!

WHAT...?

SO, YOU DO LIKE HIM. I CAN SEE RIGHT THROUGH YOU.

HE LOOKS PRETTY GOOD WHEN HE'S RUNNING!!

B-
BUT...

N-NO I DON'T

FLUMP

MOM, SUZUKA HAS A CRUSH ON TSUDA...

I'M NOT EATING!!

CLOPPA

HEY, WHERE'RE YOU GOING, SUZUKA?

IT'S ALMOST DINNER-TIME.

CLOPPA

HEY...

SHUT UP!!

I HATE YOU!!

FLUMP

Suzuka's room
please Knock.

SLAM

GEEZ!

I'VE ALWAYS...

...LOVED YOU.

BLUSH

TAP TAP

MY STUPID SISTER!!

I WONDER WHAT MY FAMILY WOULD THINK...

IF I INTRO-DUCED HIM AS MY BOY-FRIEND.

1

WHEN I TAKE FIRST PLACE IN THE NATIONALS...

WAHH!!

TSUDA-SENPAI'S PROBABLY ABOUT TO START HIS RACE RIGHT NOW...

I-I DON'T REALLY HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY TO HIM BUT...

I GUESS I COULD JUST CALL HIM, AND JOKE ABOUT HOW NERVOUS HE SOUNDS.

ソワ SHUFFLE

ソワ SHUFFLE

NAH, FORGET IT.

DON'T SCARE ME LIKE THAT!

WHO THE HELL IS IT!

!?

SHOCK

RING RING

WHO IS THIS!?

CLICK

HELLO, ASAHINA SPEAKING!

OH...HEY...

IS EVERYTHING OKAY? YOU NEVER CALL MY HOUSE...

AH, IS TSUDA-SENPAI DOING WELL?

UH...MY NAME IS MIYA-MOTO. MAY I SPEAK WITH ASA-HINA-SAN PLEASE...?

...MIYA-MOTO-SENPAI?

MIYAMOTO-SENPAI? AH, IT'S ME...

THERE WAS A CAR ACCIDENT...

...KAZUKI... WAS KILLED.

WHAT...?

A TRUCK DRIVER FELL ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL AND RAN A RED LIGHT...

TSSS

HE FORGOT HIS SPIKES. HE WAS ON HIS WAY HOME TO GET THEM...

THAT IDIOT... WHY'D HE HAVE TO GO AND DIE ON US...

WHY COULDN'T HE HAVE JUST STAYED ON THE TRACK...

TSUDA-SENPAI...

OF COURSE...

...OH... THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR COMING.

UH...

AH... YES.

WERE YOU ONE OF HIS TEAM-MATE'S...?

EVEN AS I STOOD OVER TSUDA-SENPAI'S BODY...

I FELT NEITHER SORROW NOR PAIN...

I DON'T KNOW WHY, BUT...

AND I SHOULD HAVE BEEN CRYING, TOO...

EVERYONE ELSE AROUND ME WAS CRYING SO HARD...

BUT I JUST STOOD THERE...

...WITHOUT SHEDDING EVEN A SINGLE TEAR.

I MUST BE...

...A COLD-HEARTED PERSON.

THANKS FOR DOING THAT FOR US.

MIYAMOTO CAN'T REALLY HANDLE IT RIGHT NOW.

OKAY...

I-I'LL GO TO THE TRACK CLUB ROOM TO PICK UP TSUDA-SENPAI'S THINGS.

I KNOW HE HAD A LOT OF STUFF THERE.

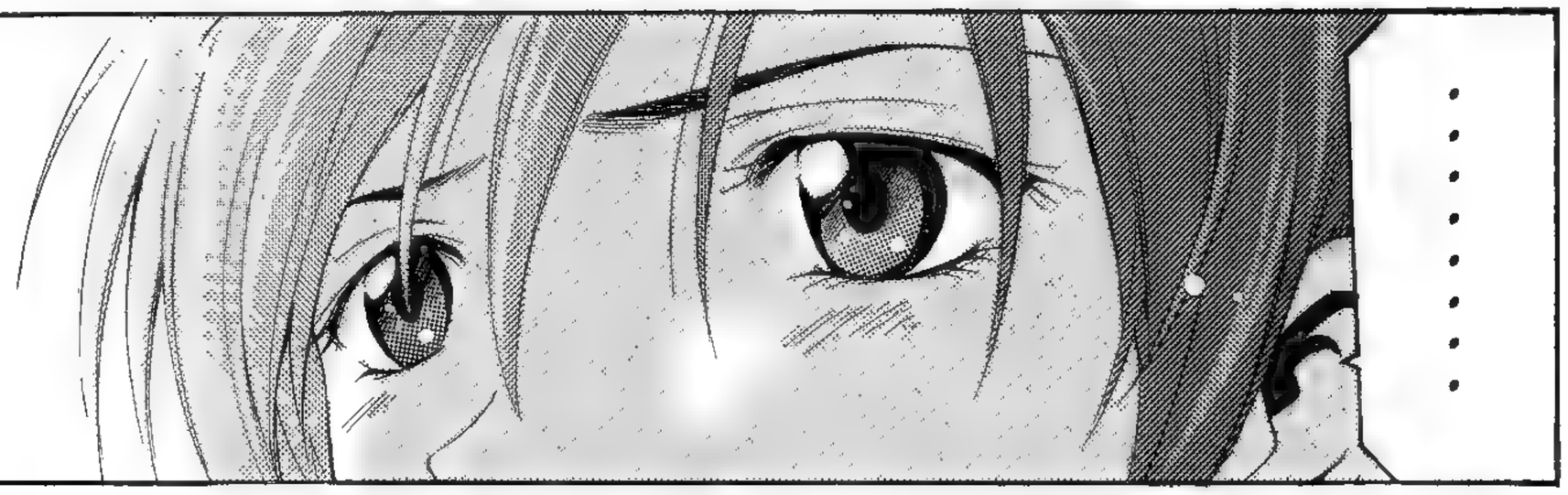
SURE.

カツン STEP

STEP カツン

TRACK TEAM

カツ// エヤ CLICK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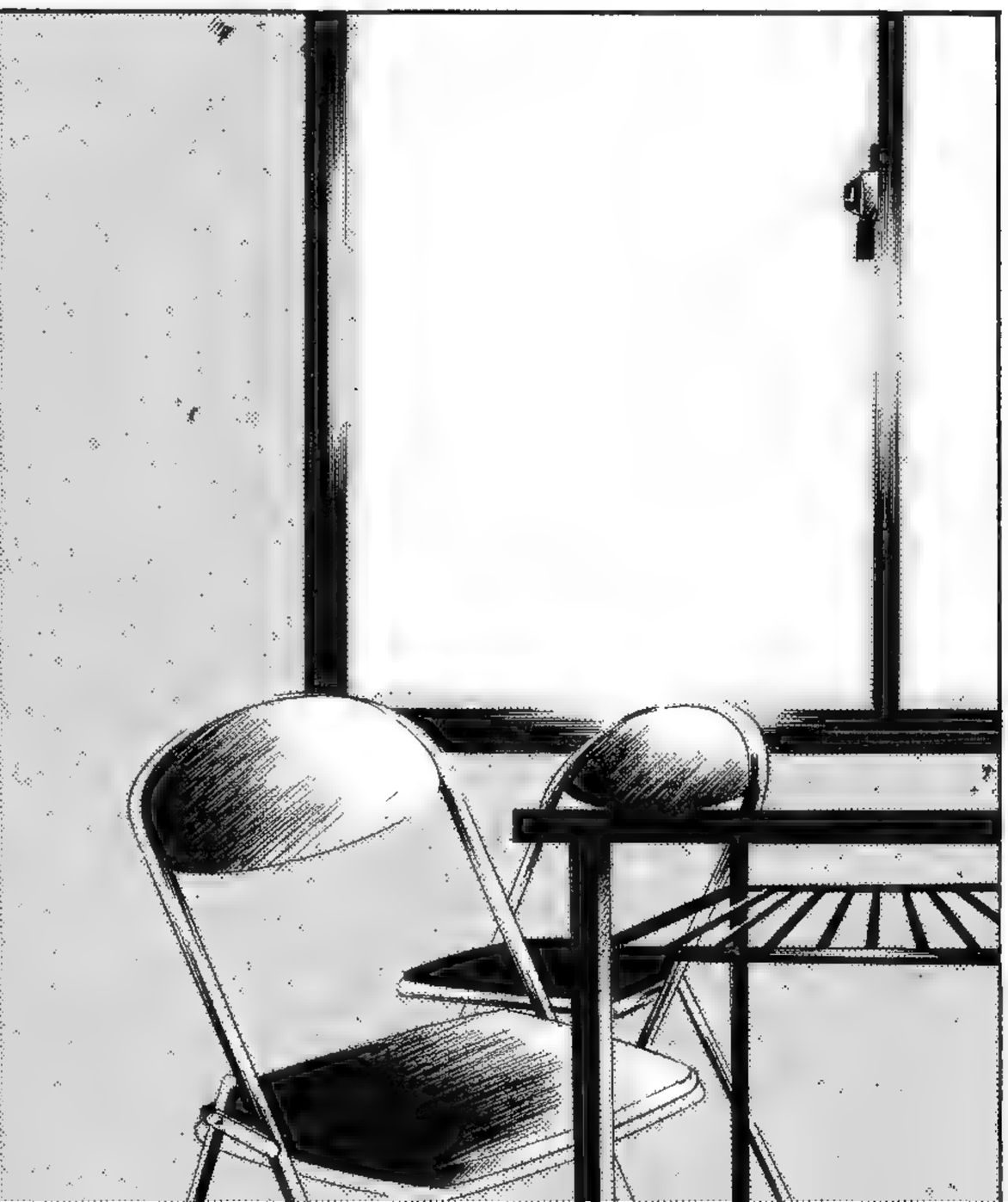


HEY, SUZUKA, EVER HEAR OF KNOCKING?

コッ
STEP

コッ
STEP

AH!! QUIT VANDALIZING THE DESKS!!

TCH... I'M NOT VANDALIZING IT, STUPID... I'M JUST STATING MY GOAL.

Hi-Mckee

Hi-Mckee

YEAH, WELL I'M TELLING THE TEACHER.

HEH, WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT!

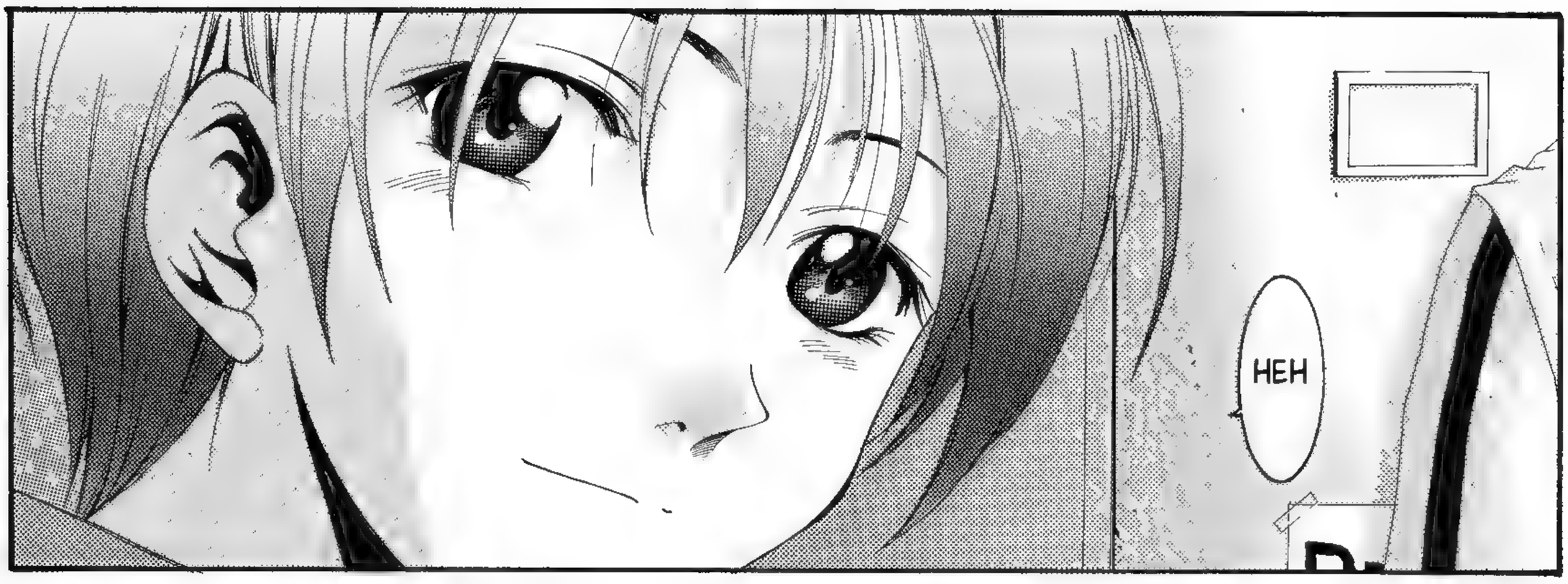
H-HEY, THAT'S A PERMANENT MARKER!

I'LL WRITE YOUR NAME, TOO!! NOW YOU'RE AN ACCOMPLICE!!

Soon to be No.1 in Japan!!

Kazuki Tsuda!!

Suzuka Asahina



Soon to be No.1 in Japan!!

Suzuka Kazuki Tsuda!!

Soon to be No.1 in Japan!!

Suzuka Asahina

Kazuki Tsuda!!

I WAS ALL READY...

DRIP

DRIP

...TO TELL YOU HOW I FELT....

...HAD TO GO AND DIE ON ME...

BUT YOU...

Mt Mckee

PLUP

...I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO TELL YOU!!

NOW...

PLUP

YOU NEVER SHOULD HAVE TOLD ME YOU LOVED ME.

YOU BUILD UP MY EXPECTATIONS, AND THEN...

HYUUU

IT'S NOT FAIR!

SUZUKA

HUH?

カラン
CLOP

...ASA-
HINA-
SAN?

WHAT'S
SHE
DOING
HERE...

SUZUKA

#69 True Feelings

W-WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, ASAHINA?

AH...

OH, YEAH...

YOU LIVE HERE, DON'T YOU, HONOKA-CHAN...

Y-YEAH...

SORT OF...

...SORRY.

I GUESS I'M IN YOUR WAY...

IS THERE SOME-THING WRONG...?

N-NO, IT'S OKAY...

UM...

OH... YOU DID?

...YEAH...

I JUST HAD SOME-THING IN MY EYE, THAT'S ALL.

Y-YOU LOOKED LIKE YOU WERE CRYING...

UH...UM...

OH NO... I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT TO SAY TO HER.

YOU'RE THE ONLY FRESHMEN GIRL WHO MADE IT TO THE CHAM-PIONSHIPS, RIGHT? THAT'S SO AMAZING.

AH...THE KANTO DISTRICT CHAMPION-SHIPS ARE COMING UP SOON!

...YEAH.

...I GUESS.

I-I WONDER IF HE'S OKAY. HE LOOKED REALLY UPSET...

I WAS HOPING THAT AKITSUKI-KUN WOULD MAKE IT, TOO, BUT HE DIDN'T GET THROUGH THE PRELIMINARIES...

.....

AH... HEY...

...EXCUSE ME. I'D BETTER GET HOME...

DID SOMETHING HAPPEN... BETWEEN YOU AND AKITSUKI?

. . . . . !

BUT...

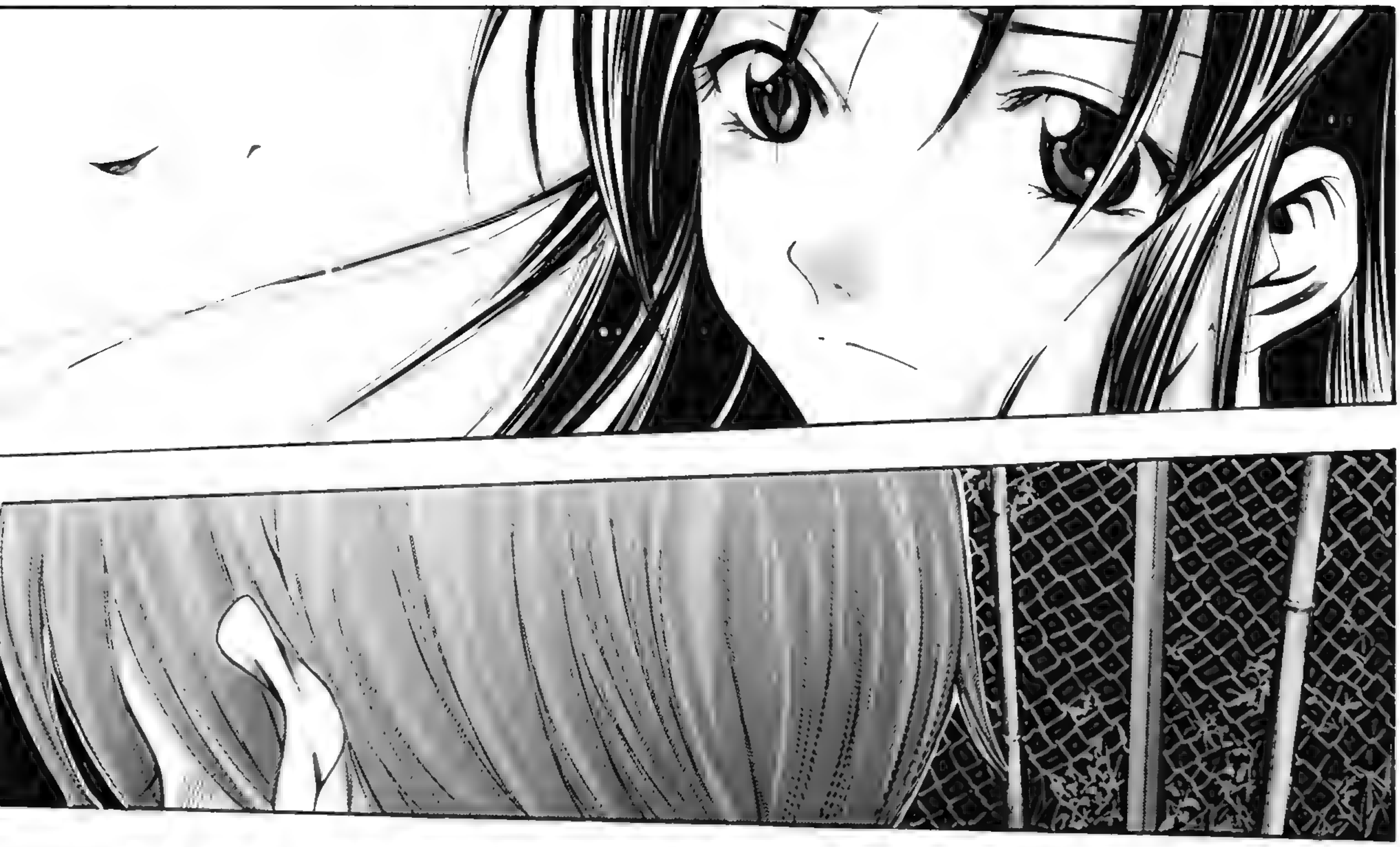
HYUU

H-HE HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH IT!!

YOU LIKE...

...AKITSUKI-KUN, DON'T YOU, ASAHINA-SAN...?

...WHAT?



YOU'RE LYING.
WHY ARE YOU ALWAYS LIKE THIS...?

I TOLD YOU BEFORE, I DON'T REALLY SEE HIM LIKE THAT...
YAMATO-KUN IS JUST A FRIEND...

WHENEVER I TRY TO HAVE A SERIOUS CONVERSATION WITH YOU, YOU ALWAYS LIE AND TRY TO HIDE HOW YOU REALLY FEEL...
I JUST SAID...

.....!?

WHAT!?

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

WHAT DOES IT MATTER TO YOU?

IT MATTERS!

I'M SICK OF YOUR BULLSHIT!

DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW HARD YOU MAKE IT FOR EVERYONE AROUND YOU?

WHY CAN'T YOU JUST TELL AKITSUKI WHETHER YOU LIKE HIM OR NOT?

IT MAT-TERS TO ME...

...AND TO AKITSUKI, TOO!

YOU MAKE LIFE IMPOSSIBLE FOR ALL OF US!

IT'S YOUR WISHY-WASHY ATTITUDE THAT'S THE PROBLEM.

YOU CAN GO OUT WITH HIM ANY TIME YOU WANT, YOU KNOW THAT...

A...

ALL I DID WAS—

WHAT THE HELL IS THE MATTER WITH YOU?

YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO HAVE THE ONLY PERSON YOU LOVE DIE ON YOU.

YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW I FEEL!

……!!

YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO HAVE THE GUY YOU LOVE STOLEN AWAY FROM YOU BY SOMEONE ELSE.

WELL, YOU DON'T KNOW HOW I FEEL EITHER!!

ハァ ハァ

HYUU

……！

AKITSUKI HAS BEEN...

...WAITING FOR YOU A LONG, LONG TIME...

WOULD YOU JUST BE WITH HIM AL-READY...

WHAT...?

W-WAIT!

WHOOSH

WAIT A SEC-OND!!

HEY, ASAHINA-SAN!!

ASA-HINA-SAN.

STEP

AH...

W-WHAT'S WRONG? YOU'RE ALL SWEATY...

WHAT...? OH, IT'S NOTH-ING...

AKIT-SUKI-KUN.

OH...SHE WAS JUST HERE A SECOND AGO...

WHAT... REALLY!?

ASAHINA DISAPPEARED, AND...

I CAN'T FIND HER ANYWHERE.

YOU LOOKED PRETTY DEPRESSED.

AH...UM...ARE YOU FEELING BETTER, AKITSUKI?

...

W-WHERE IS SHE!?

I...

I CAN'T GET BETWEEN THESE TWO RIGHT NOW. THERE'S JUST NO ROOM FOR ME...

WHERE DID SHE GO!?

NO ROOM AT ALL...

SHE WENT TOWARD THE PARK...

HURRY...

THANKS! I'LL GO LOOK OVER THERE!!

SO, I GUESS...

OKAY.

THAT'S JUST HOW IT GOES...

WOULD YOU JUST BE WITH HIM ALREADY...

I CAN'T...

...

AKIT-SUKI HAS BEEN...

...WAITING FOR YOU A LONG, LONG TIME...

...THAN HAVE TO GO THROUGH THAT ALL OVER AGAIN.

I'D RATHER JUST BE ALL ALONE...

FWISH

CAN I...

_STAY HERE TO NIGHT?

PLEASE...!!

ALL ALONE...

...IN LOVE WITH YOU, ASAHINA!

I'M STILL...

I'LL APOLO-GIZE TOMOR-ROW...I PROMISE...

AND THEN WE CAN JUST BE FRIENDS AGAIN...

...I'M SORRY...

THERE YOU ARE!

STEP

...HUH?

HAHH

HAHH

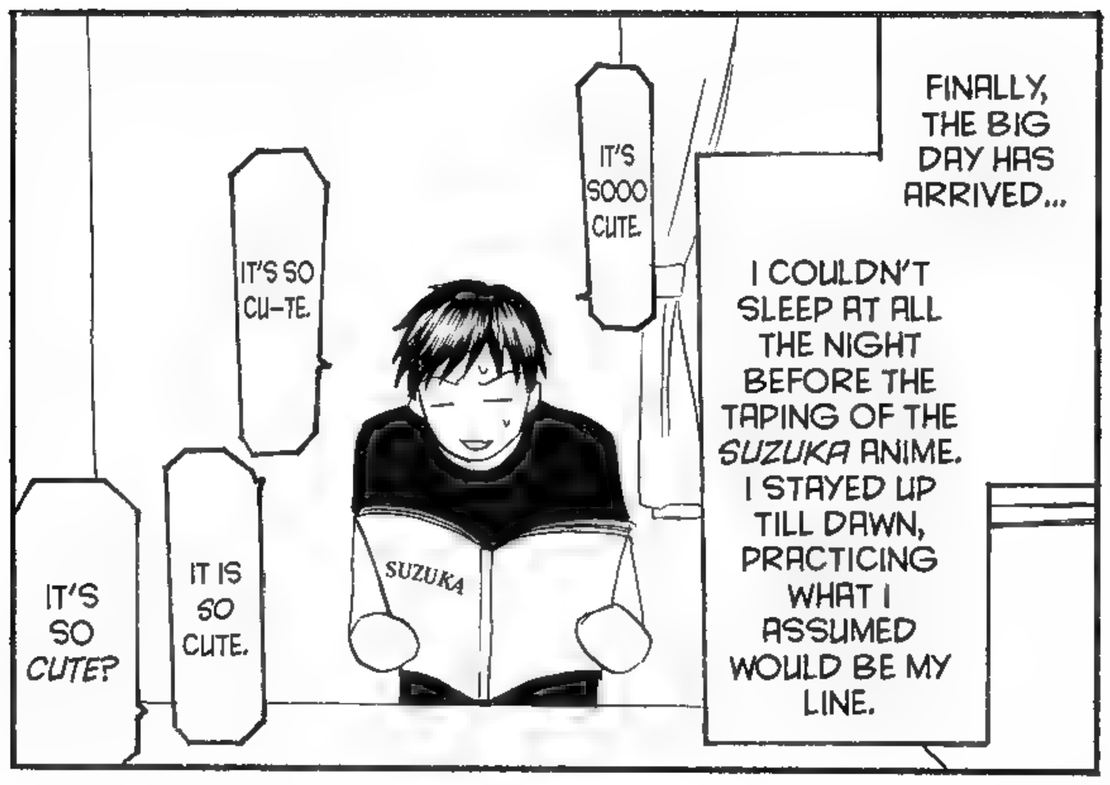
HAHH

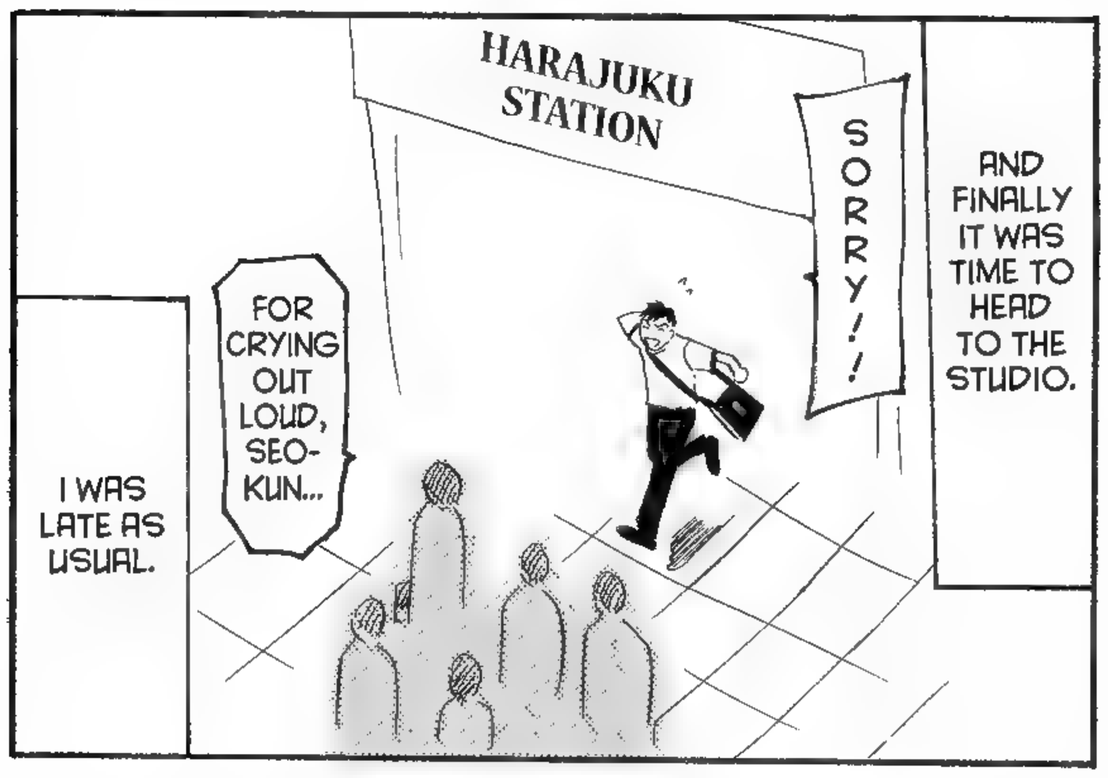
HAHH

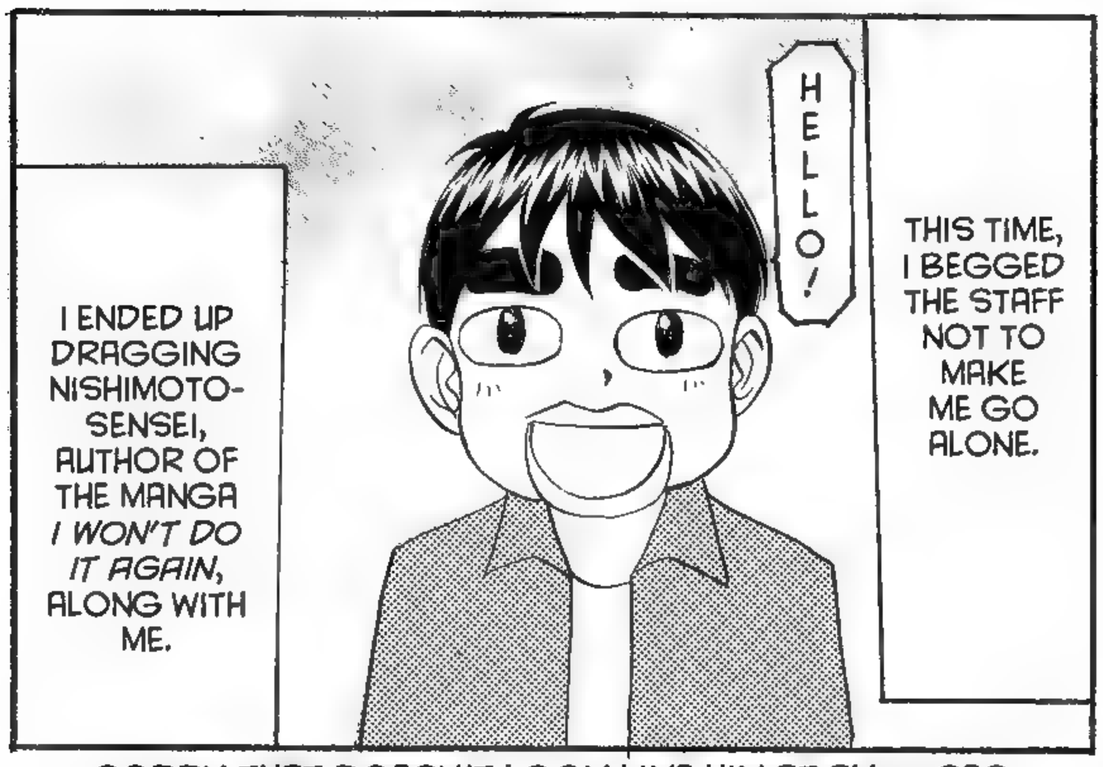
CONTINUED IN VOLUME 9

SPECIAL BONUS MANGA

"PLEASE DON'T DRAG ME OUT IN PUBLIC— PART 2"

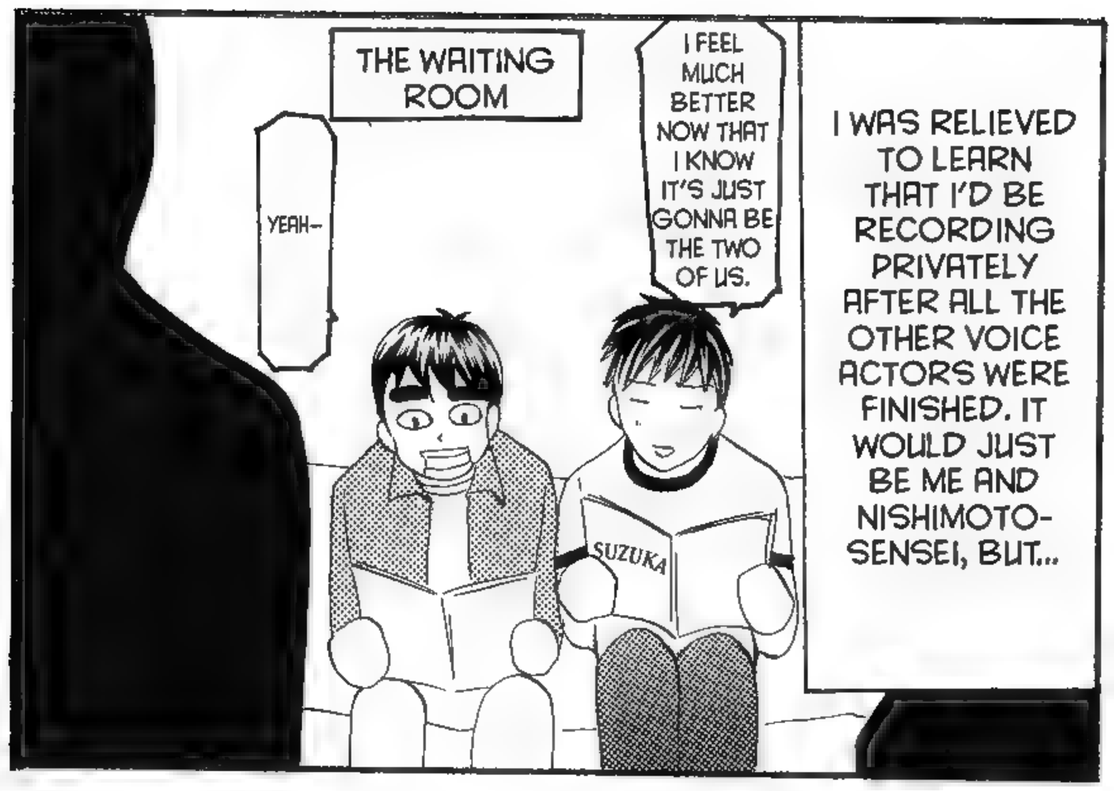

FINALLY, THE BIG DAY HAS ARRIVED...
I COULDN'T SLEEP AT ALL THE NIGHT BEFORE THE TAPING OF THE *SUZUKA* ANIME. I STAYED UP TILL DAWN, PRACTICING WHAT I ASSUMED WOULD BE MY LINE.
IT'S SOOO CUTE.
IT'S SO CU-TE.
IT IS *SO* CUTE.
IT'S SO *CUTE?*
SUZUKA




HELLO!
THIS TIME, I BEGGED THE STAFF NOT TO MAKE ME GO ALONE.
I ENDED UP DRAGGING NISHIMOTO-SENSEI, AUTHOR OF THE MANGA *I WON'T DO IT AGAIN*, ALONG WITH ME.

SORRY, THAT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE HIM AT ALL — SEO

WHEN YOU WRITE ABOUT THIS IN *I WON'T DO IT AGAIN*, MAKE ME LOOK COOL, OKAY?
UHHH... I DON'T THINK SO...
WOBBLE
PANT
PANT
I WAS HALF DEAD FROM LACK OF SLEEP AND OVER-ACTIVE NERVES.


THE WAITING ROOM
YEAH--
I FEEL MUCH BETTER NOW THAT I KNOW IT'S JUST GONNA BE THE TWO OF US.
SUZUKA
I WAS RELIEVED TO LEARN THAT I'D BE RECORDING PRIVATELY AFTER ALL THE OTHER VOICE ACTORS WERE FINISHED. IT WOULD JUST BE ME AND NISHIMOTO-SENSEI, BUT...

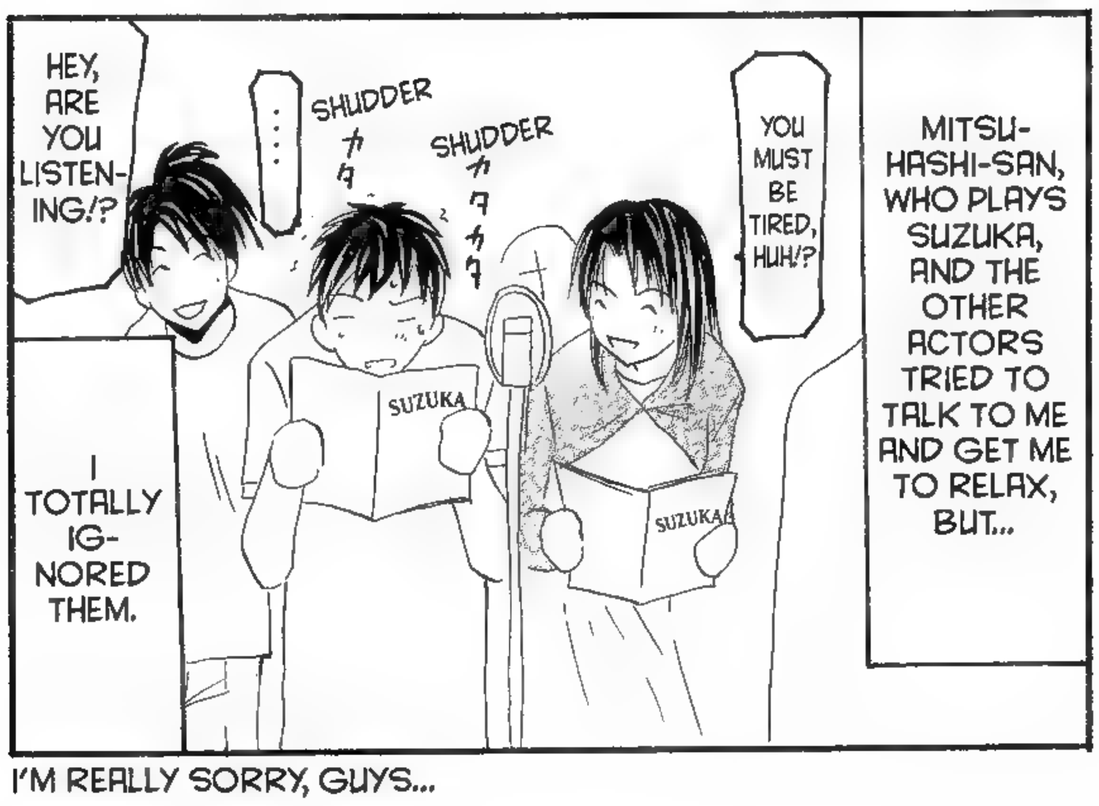
WHAT!?
LET'S GO!!
ALL RIGHT, IT'S TIME FOR YOU TWO TO COME JOIN EVERY-BODY.
クルッ
TWING
MITSUYA-SAN SET ME UP.

CHATTER #17
HOW DID I GET MY-SELF INTO THIS...?
#17 CHATTER
THERE I STOOD, IN FRONT OF THE MICRO-PHONE AND SUR-ROUNDED BY ALL THOSE PROFES-SIONAL VOICE AC-TORS...
...WISHING I'D NEVER WRITTEN LINES FOR THE CHARAC-TER I WAS SUPPOSED TO BE PLAYING.

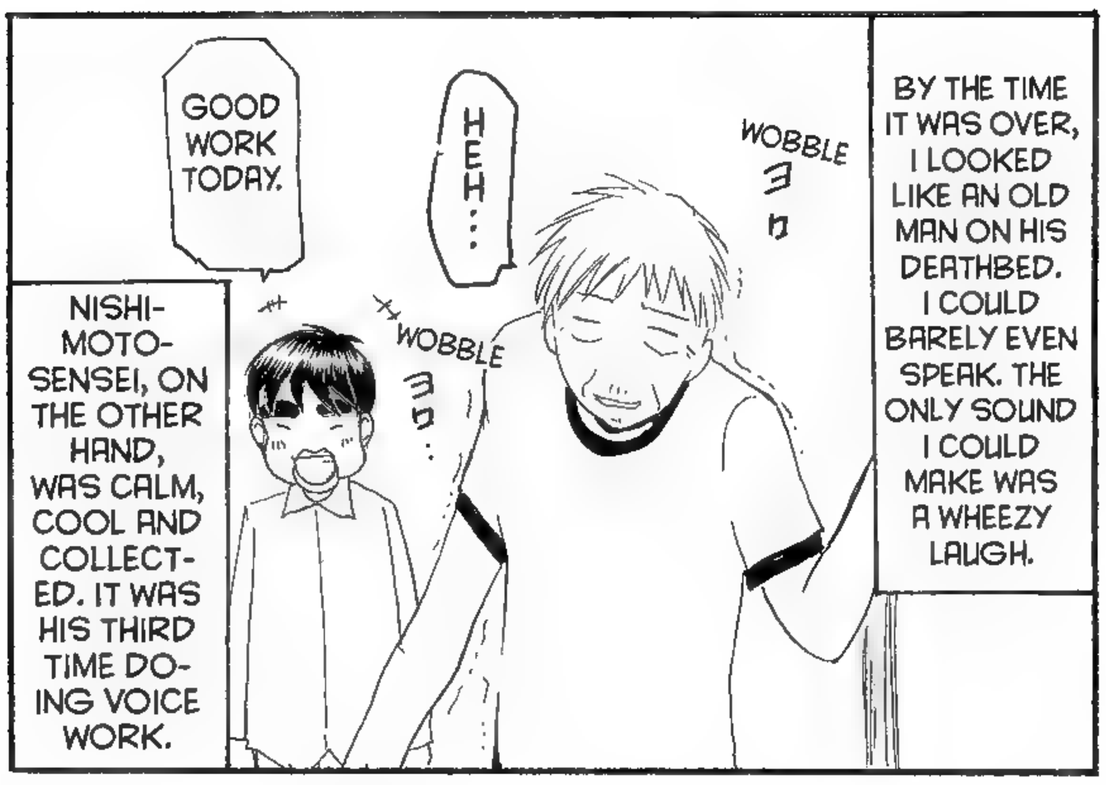
WHAT!?
...TURNED OUT TO BE NISHI-MOTO-SENSEI'S PART.
AND THE LINE THAT I PRAC-TICED ALL NIGHT, 'IT'S SO CUTE' ...
ALL RIGHT, SEO-SENSEI'S LINES WILL BE 'WHOA!' AND 'IT'S ALL OVER.' OKAY?

WOULD YOU GUYS JUST LEAVE, PLEASE?
SMIRK
ニヤ
SMIRK
ニヤ
FOR SOME REASON, TWO OF OUR CREW MEMBERS KEPT STANDING RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME, WATCHING WITH HUGE GRINS ON THEIR FACES.

NOT ONCE IN MY LIFE HAVE I "AD-LIBBED" SOME-THING WITHOUT MEETING DISAS-TROUS RESULTS...
AD-LIB...?
NOW LET'S HAVE YOU TWO DO SOME BACK-GROUND VOCALS FOR US.
CAN YOU JUST AD-LIB SOME-THING?
SOME-HOW I MAN-AGED TO FINISH RECORD-ING, AND WAS JUST START-ING TO RELAX.



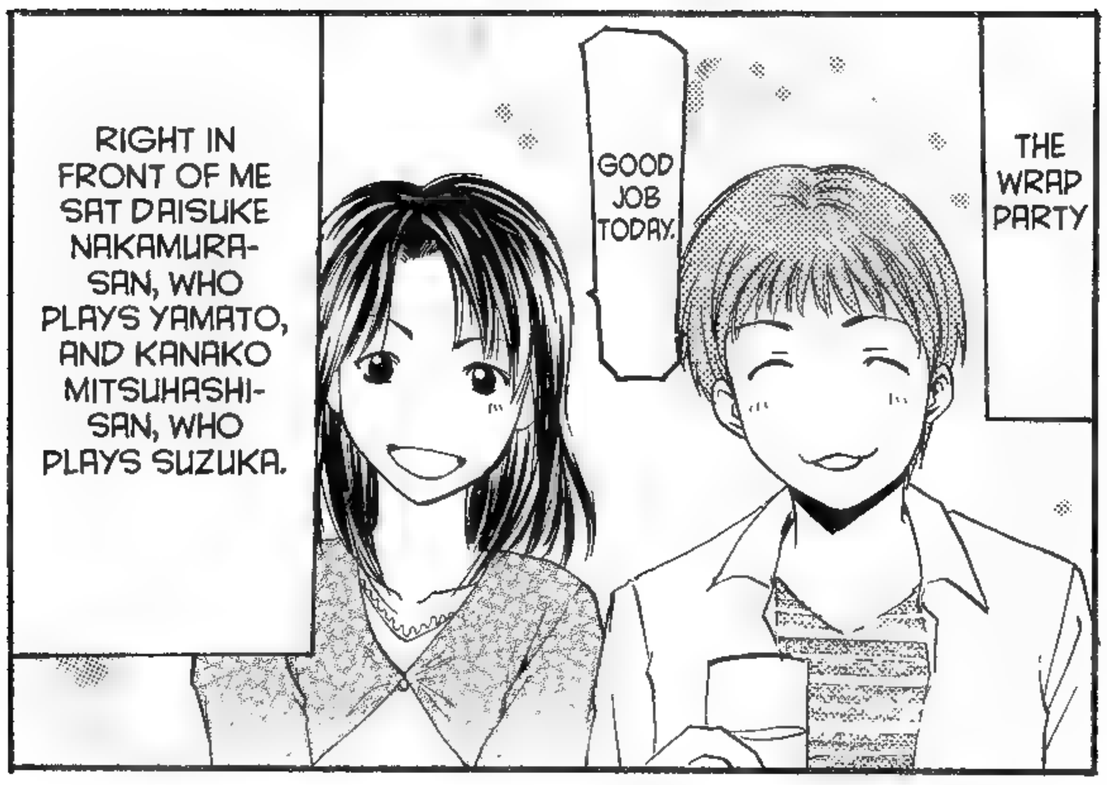
I'M REALLY SORRY, GUYS...

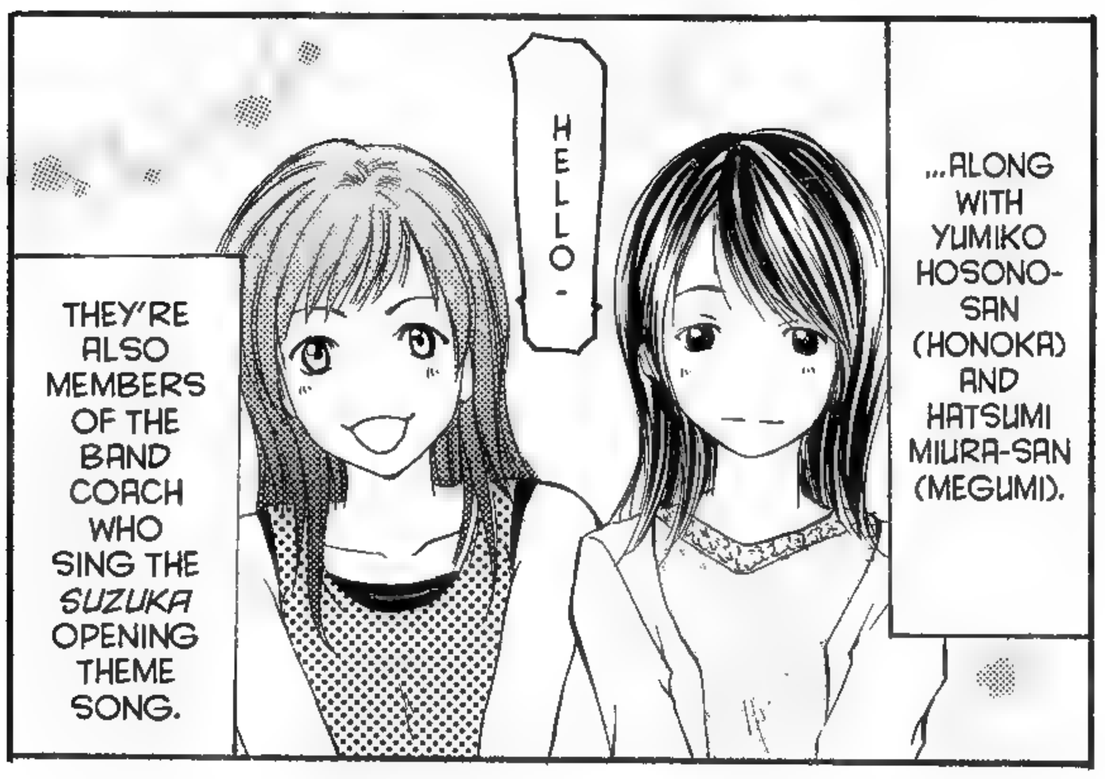

NISHI-MOTO-SENSEI, ON THE OTHER HAND, WAS CALM, COOL AND COLLECT-ED. IT WAS HIS THIRD TIME DO-ING VOICE WORK.
GOOD WORK TODAY.
HEH...
WOBBLE
WOBBLE
WOBBLE
BY THE TIME IT WAS OVER, I LOOKED LIKE AN OLD MAN ON HIS DEATHBED. I COULD BARELY EVEN SPEAK. THE ONLY SOUND I COULD MAKE WAS A WHEEZY LAUGH.

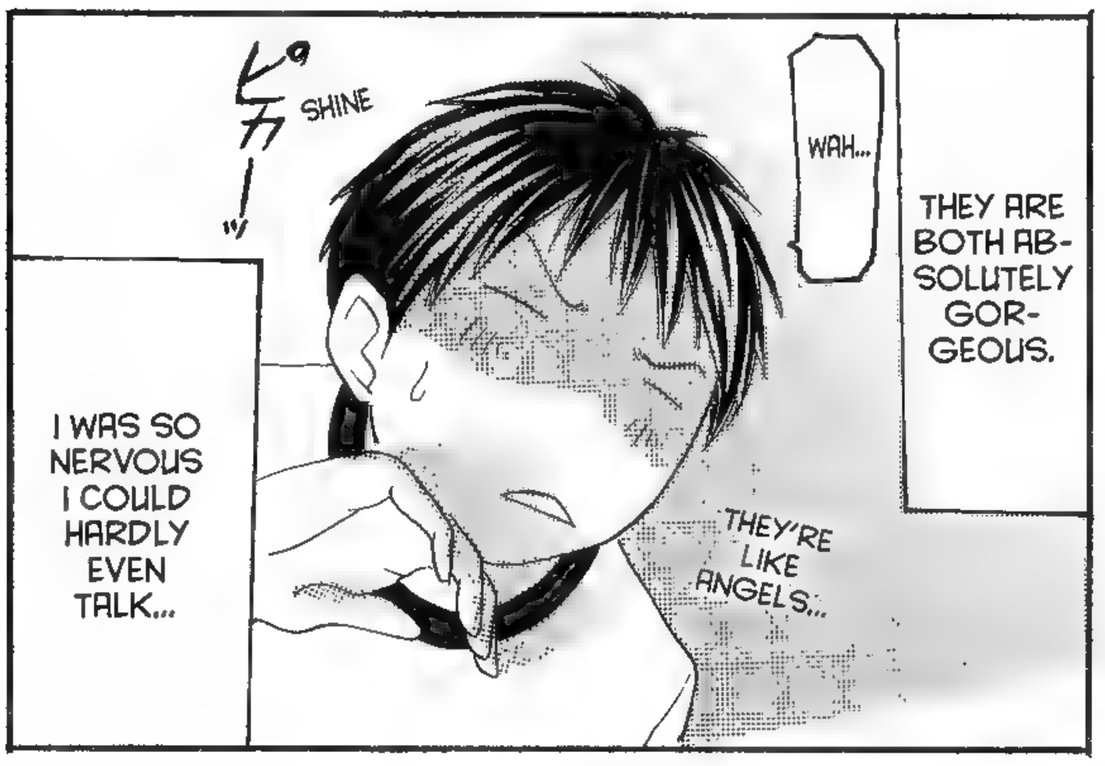
...GUESS I CAN'T BLAME HIM.
I TOLD YOU THAT'S NOT GONNA HAP-PEN.
AH... JUST MAKE ME LOOK COOL, OKAY.
THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR TODAY. I THINK I'LL BE ABLE TO COME UP WITH A GOOD STORY OUT OF ALL THIS.

THEY TURNED DOWN ALL MY IDEAS.
WHAT?
SHOCK
HI!
THIS IS SO BOR-ING.
ON THE WAY BACK, WE HAD A MEET-ING AT A FAMILY RESTAU-RANT.

SEO-KUN, JUST SO YOU KNOW, WE'RE HAVING A WRAP PARTY AFTER THIS.
SHUDDER
ANOTHER BEER, PLEASE. THE BIGGEST SIZE YOU'VE GOT!
I COULDN'T HANDLE IT ANYMORE, SO I TURNED TO BOOZE.

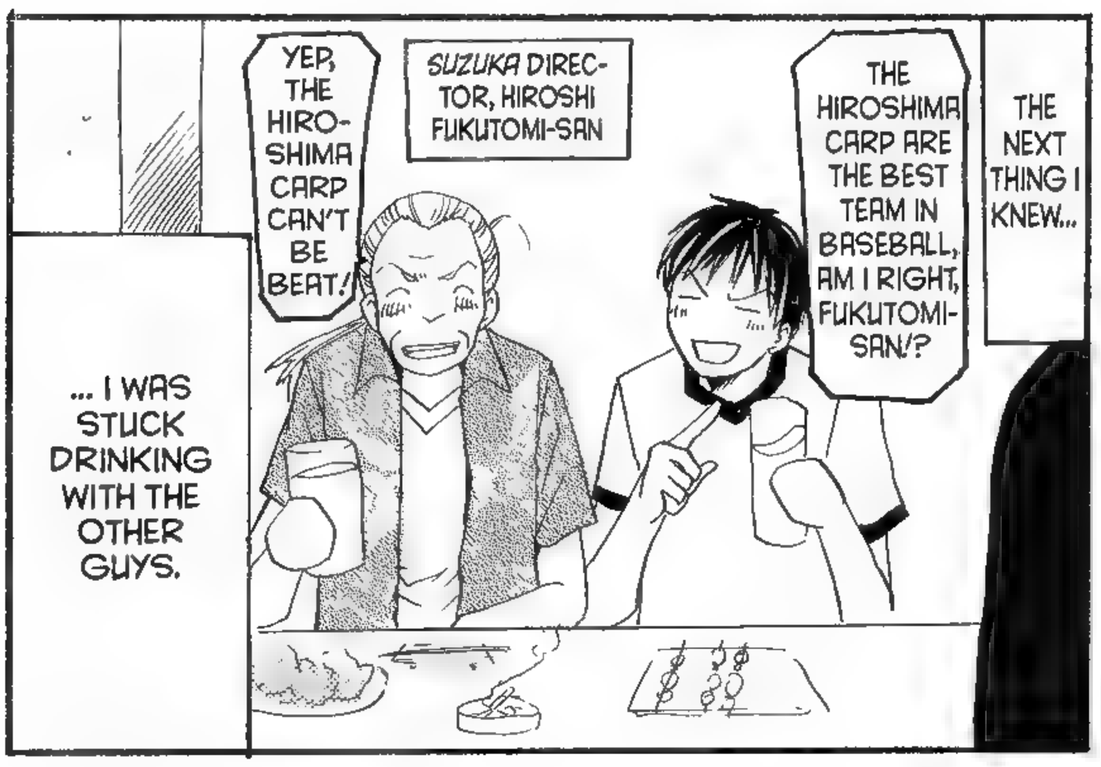

RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME SAT DAISUKE NAKAMURA-SAN, WHO PLAYS YAMATO, AND KANAKO MITSUHASHI-SAN, WHO PLAYS SUZUKA.
GOOD JOB TODAY.
THE WRAP PARTY


THEY'RE ALSO MEMBERS OF THE BAND COACH WHO SING THE SUZUKA OPENING THEME SONG.
HELLO-
...ALONG WITH YUMIKO HOSONO-SAN (HONOKA) AND HATSUMI MIURA-SAN (MEGUMI).



COMING SOON IN THE BONUS MANGA SECTION IT'S... *"YOU SCARED OF HEIGHTS? HOW THE HELL SHOULD I KNOW?"*

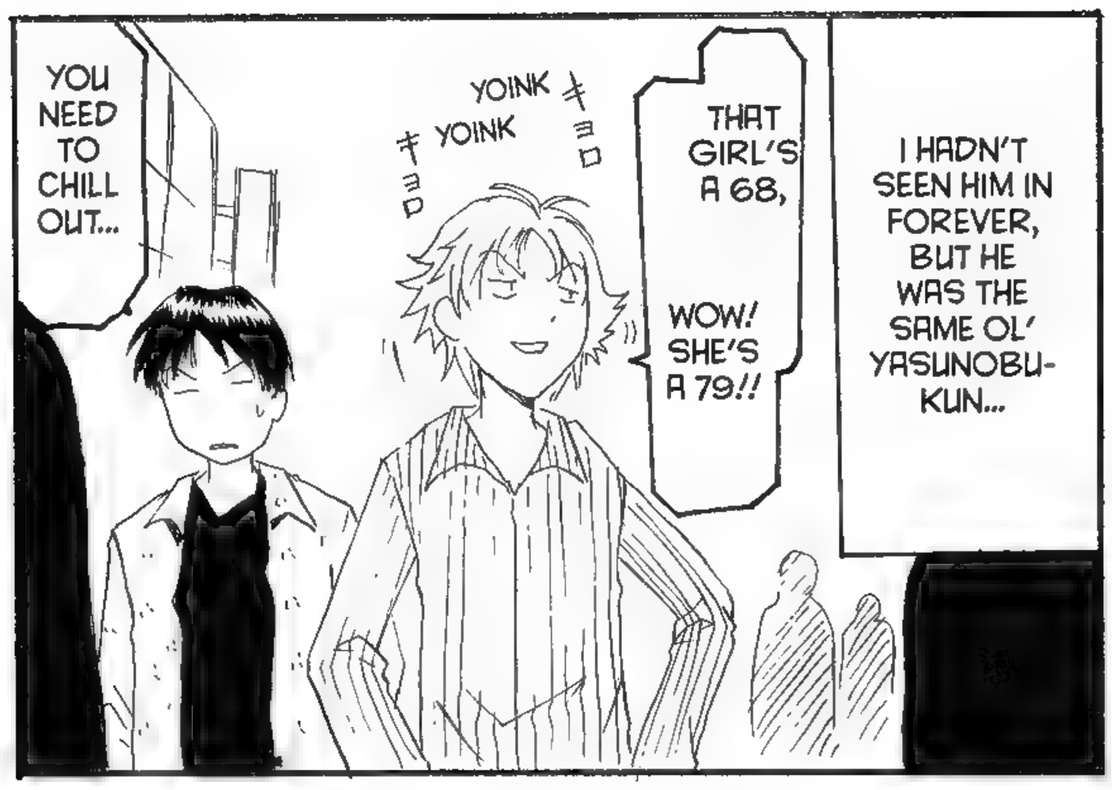
WHEREIN KOUJI SEO TAKES ON PARAGLIDING IN AN ATTEMPT TO GET BACK AT HIS COWORKERS!!

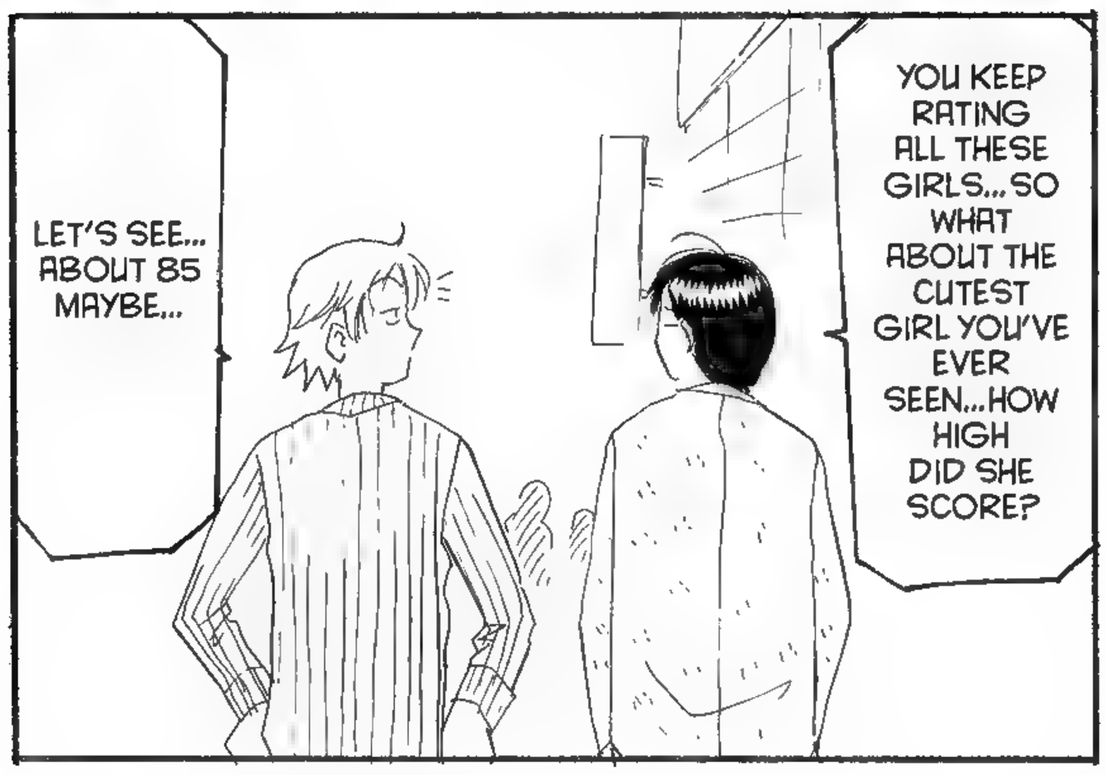

... I WAS STUCK DRINKING WITH THE OTHER GUYS.
YEP, THE HIROSHIMA CARP CAN'T BE BEAT!
SUZUKA DIRECTOR, HIROSHI FUKUTOMI-SAN
THE HIROSHIMA CARP ARE THE BEST TEAM IN BASEBALL, AM I RIGHT, FUKUTOMI-SAN!?
THE NEXT THING I KNEW...

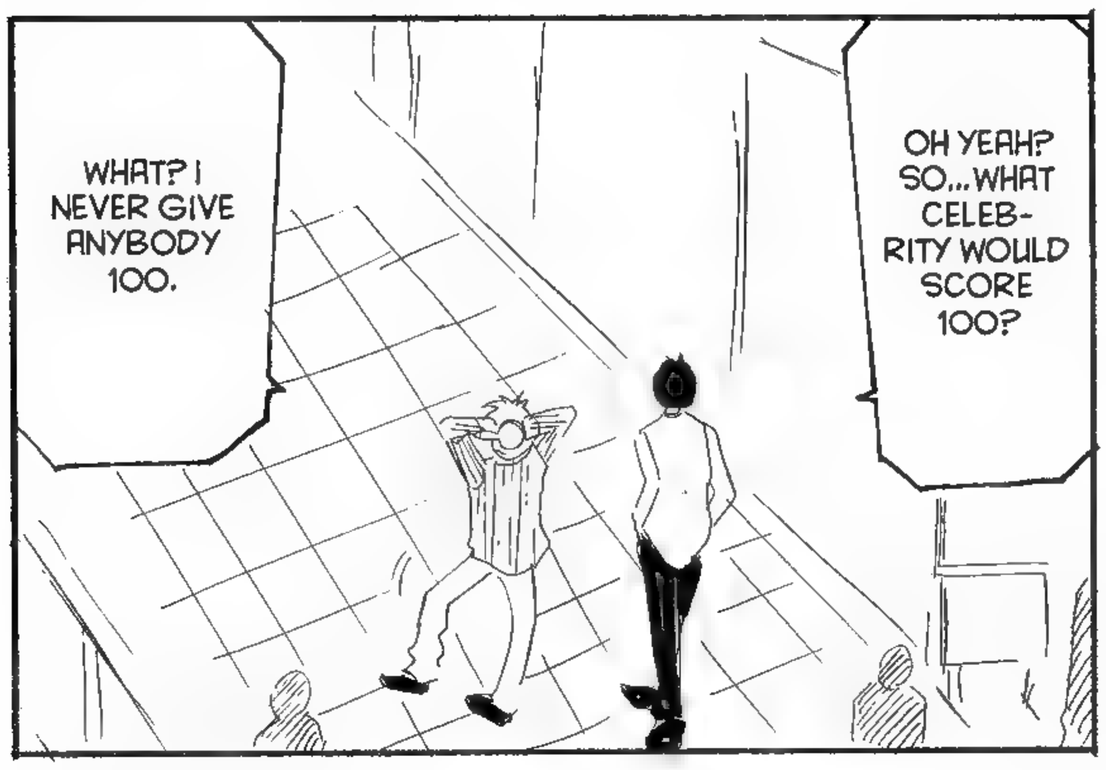
THE END

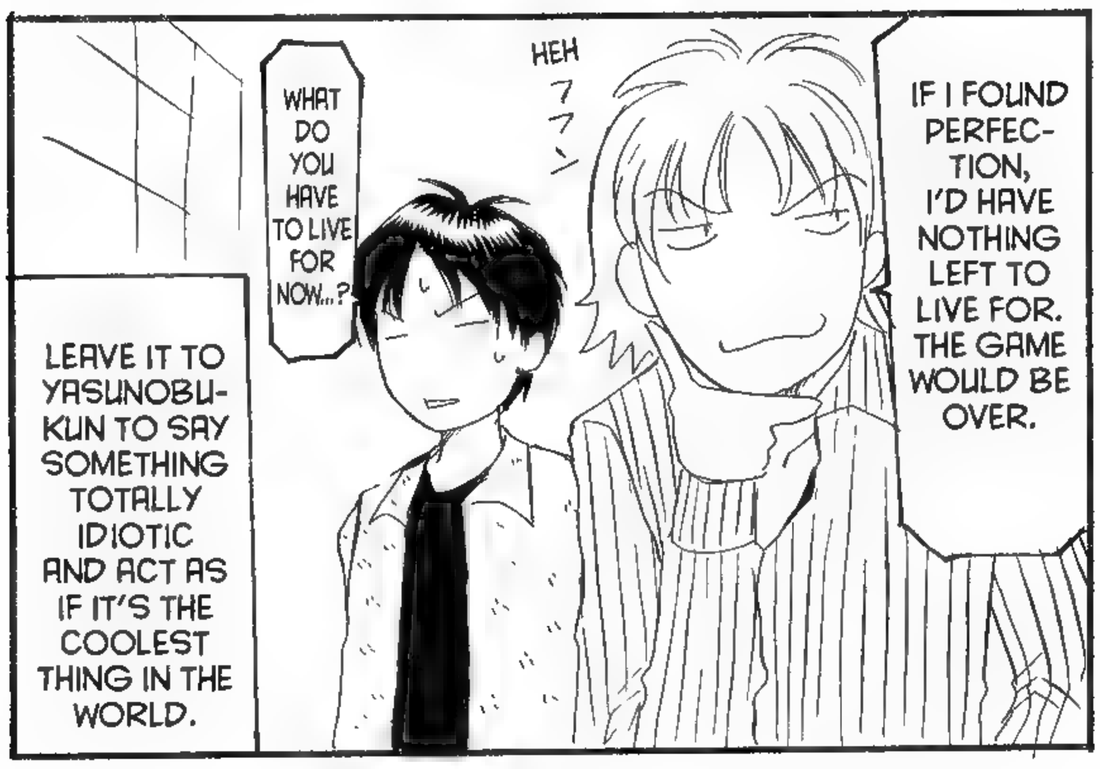
SUPER SPECIAL BONUS MANGA

"WELCOME HOME! YASUNOBU-KUN"


YOU NEED TO CHILL OUT...
キヨロ
YOINK
YOINK
キヨロ
THAT GIRL'S A 68,
WOW! SHE'S A 79!!
I HADN'T SEEN HIM IN FOREVER, BUT HE WAS THE SAME OL' YASUNOBU-KUN...

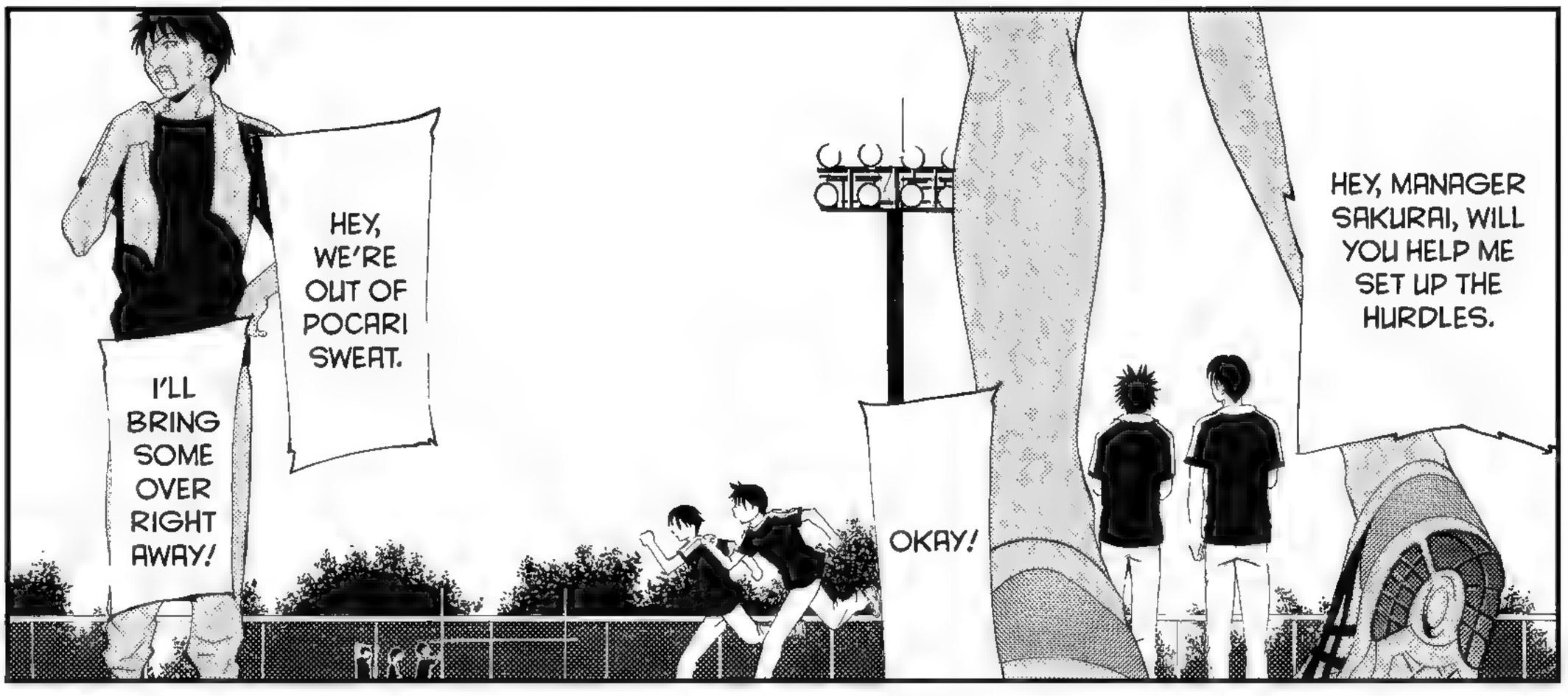

LET'S SEE... ABOUT 85 MAYBE...
YOU KEEP RATING ALL THESE GIRLS... SO WHAT ABOUT THE CUTEST GIRL YOU'VE EVER SEEN... HOW HIGH DID SHE SCORE?


WHAT? I NEVER GIVE ANYBODY 100.
OH YEAH? SO... WHAT CELEB-RITY WOULD SCORE 100?


LEAVE IT TO YASUNOBU-KUN TO SAY SOMETHING TOTALLY IDIOTIC AND ACT AS IF IT'S THE COOLEST THING IN THE WORLD.
WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO LIVE FOR NOW...?
HEH フフン
IF I FOUND PERFEC-TION, I'D HAVE NOTHING LEFT TO LIVE FOR. THE GAME WOULD BE OVER.

Translation Notes

Japanese is a tricky language for most Westerners, and translation is often more an art than a science. For your edification and reading pleasure, here are notes on some of the places where we could have gone in a different direction or where a Japanese cultural reference is used.

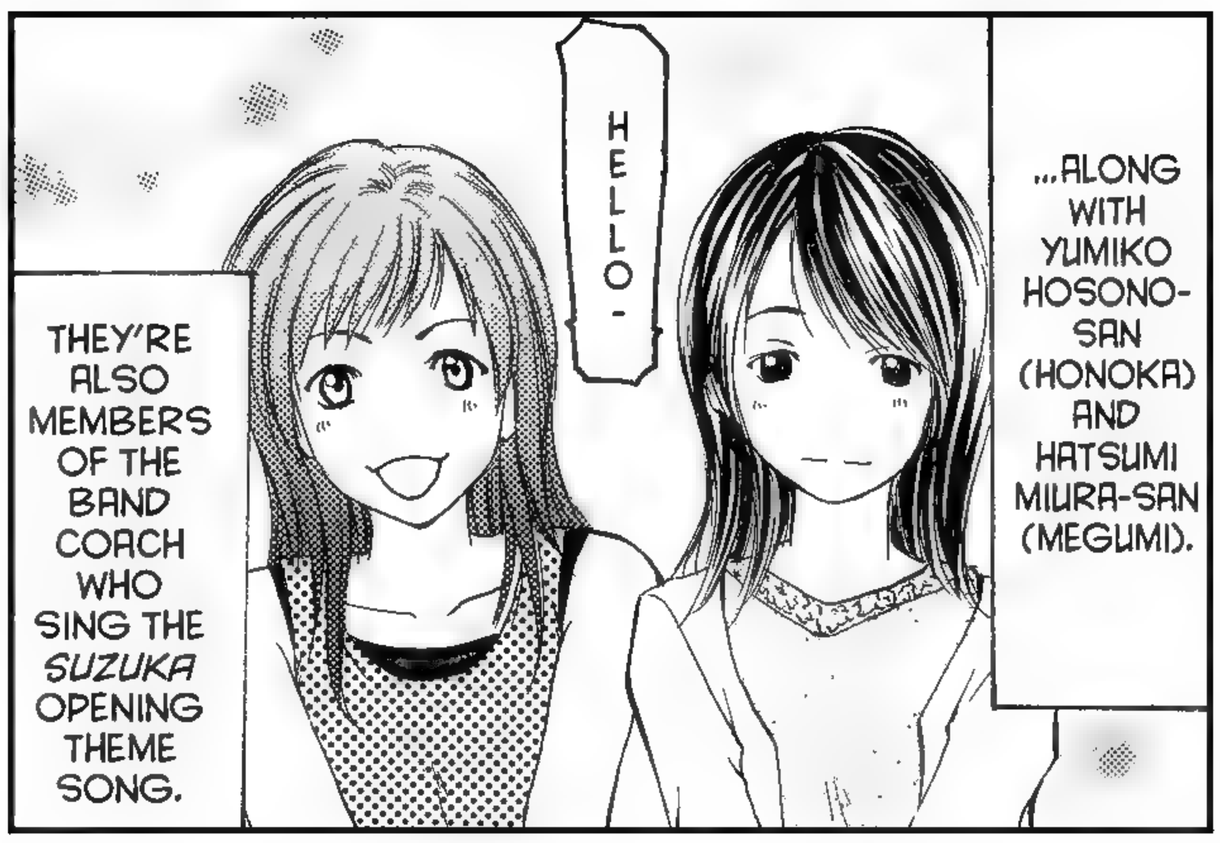


"Mmmmm Sweat," page 39

Pocari Sweat is a popular Japanese sports drink.

Okonomiyaki, page 73

Okonomiyaki is often referred to as a Japanese pancake. It's a concoction made of batter and a mixture of meat, vegetables, egg, and sometimes noodles. At most *okonomiyaki* restaurants your table will have a built in grill, and you can cook your own *okonomiyaki* right at the table.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Coach, page 189

Coach is a band made up of Yumiko Hosono, Hatsumi Miura, Ai Hayashi, Satomi Akesaka, and Michie Kitaura.

Preview of Volume 9

We're pleased to present you a preview from *Suzuka* volume 9. Please check our website (www.delreymanga.com) to see when this volume will be available in English. For now you'll have to make do with Japanese!

なんなのよ!!!

え……

何(なに)が……

どこで何(なに)してたって
私(わたし)の勝手(かって)でしょ!?

関係(かんけい)ないじゃない
アンタなんかに!!

それなのにこんな所まで追っかけて来て・・・・
バカなんじゃないの!?
大っキライ!!
いい加減にしてよ!!
頼んでないわよ探してくれなんて!!
すっごいメーワク!!
・・・・悪イ・・・・
でも心配だったから・・・・
・・・・・・!
ピクッ
・・・・・・・・
やめてよ・・・・

これ以上(いじょう)
優(やさ)しくされたら
私(わたし)……

私(わたし)+大和(やまと)くんの
こと……

……
え……
……あの……

もうイヤなの……

え……

な…何(なに)が……

……

もう二度(にど)と……

あんな思(おも)いしたくないの……

HIROYUKI TAMAKOSHI

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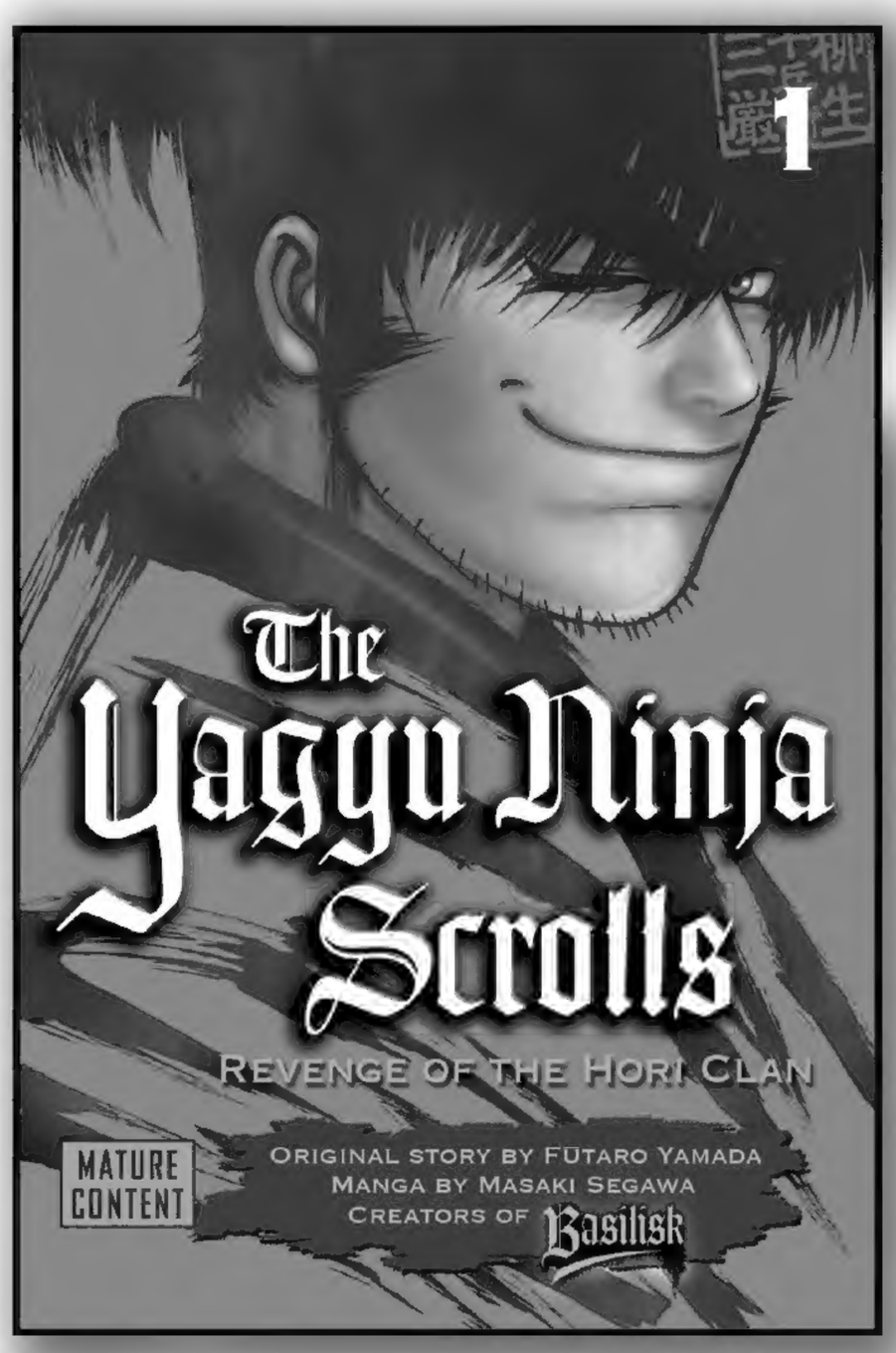

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Suzuka 8

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English digital edition published by Kodansha Advanced Media, LLC, San Francisco.

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ISBN: 9781682334201

Digital Edition: 1.0.0

Translator/adapter: David Ury
Lettering: North Market Street Graphics